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WITH *malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.*

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN
In the "Second Inaugural," 1865

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OF ALL *the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion, and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens. . . . A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation* DESERT *the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure—reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.*

—*George Washington*
In the "Farewell Address," 1796

THE SEVEN WORDS

PIERRE DELACROIX

I

MARTYR

Mailed, burly mercenaries, bound
  By golden duty chains,
To the cross the Martyr nailed and found
  No pitiful words for His pains.
Their blind obedience He pitied and prayed
  For them toward the blue,
"O God, my Father, forgive them," he said,
  "They know not what they do!"

II

SAVIOUR

Beside Him hang two dying thieves
  With dimming eyes. At Fate
One rails and curses; the other grieves,
  Though repentance comes full late.
The Saviour woos with words of love
  To God the repentant soul,
"This day shalt thou be in heaven above
  "With me!" How wonderful!

III

FILIAL ONE

Distraught, in tears beside her son
  Stands Mary of Nazareth,
A widow, now bereft of the one
  To whom she first gave breath.
On His bosom had leaned that trustworthy youth,
  Boanerges, stripling John.
Though one betrayed, and some in truth
  Stood afar, and most had gone,
Yet there stands John, disciple of love,
  Still true to the Filial One,
And the parched, dying lips from above
  Murmur, "Woman, behold thy son."

IV

Water of Life

"I thirst," cries He who once had said,
"The Water of Life am I,"
In anguish and fever He lifts His head
Helpless and ready to die.
The cruse of heaven to earth is hurled
To break and with water of life
To sate the thirst of a drought-smitten world
Aflame with sin and strife.

V

Captain of Our Salvation

Lo, the Captain of our salvation there
On the cross, "It is finished," cries;
The majestic head, thorn-torn and bare,
Inert on His bosom lies.
The long, hard path of the search for souls
Of men who had wandered away
Is ended at last as the thunder rolls
And strange clouds gather grey.

VI

Shepherd

"My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"
Discloses the awful vale;
The rod and staff of God to see
Can my Shepherd's soul prevail?

VII

Lord

The day falls prey to a doleful night
At the agonized cry of my Lord;
But radiant His soul with blissful light
As the Father fulfils His word.
Eternal dawn breaks clear at the end
Of the sanguine way of the tree,
"My spirit, Father, to Thee I commend,"
Reveals my God to me.

THE RHAPSODY OF "EXILE"

EARLE BENNETT CROSS *

HE who is in many respects the greatest of the Hebrew prophets is unknown to us by name. His message, however, is treasured by all devout spirits who love the Scriptures. He wrote the sixteen chapters in the book of Isaiah which begin with the fortieth. By some he is called Deutero-Isaiah, and one has called him the "Great Unknown." We suggest that he might well be called "Exile," for he wrought in exile to persuade his folk that their God was potent to enable them to return home.

That the work of "Exile" in Isaiah 40–55 is a literary unity was recognized by Professor R. G. Moulton in his "Literary Study of the Bible," [1] and he likened the composition to a rhapsody. The later chapters 56–66 were included in the rhapsody. While it is true that these latter form a sequel to the poem in chapters 40–55, a close scrutiny reveals that they differ in theme and somewhat in spirit. It is a serious question whether they were written by the same author as he who wrote chapters 40–55. While it is, therefore, possible to include chapters 56–66 in a literary unity with chapters 40–55 as Dr. Moulton does under the caption "The Rhapsody of Zion Redeemed," the material in chapters 40–55 stands out as of superior worth. Dr. Moulton further compared the movement in the "Rhapsody of Zion Redeemed" to "the succession of parts in an oratorio." [2] This was an insight far above that of most scholars who find in these chapters little more than a collection of short oracles only loosely related one to the other. Under the influence of Dr. Moulton's suggestion we find in the shorter compass of chapters 40–55 a composition more closely knit together in a common theme than the longer extent of chapters. Hence we are disposed to present these sixteen chapters as the supreme work of "Exile," and to discuss his message as it is found therein.

We find at the outset an announcement of the themes which are interwoven in the complete work. Dr. George Adam Smith called these themes four voices, but he did not observe specifically that these voices spell the themes of the whole composition. As we discern them these themes are: 1. The penalties for sins past have been paid

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[1] R. G. Moulton, Literary Study of the Bible, p. 435.

[2] R. G. Moulton, Op. cit. p. 435.

(40:1, 2); 2. The challenge from God is the building of his highway for all flesh (40:3–5); 3. For this task God's word is the eternal inspiration (40:6–8); 4. Zion is rallied to the proclamation of the true God who comes as a mighty warrior to combat his foes, and as a tender shepherd to cherish his folk (40:9–11). Since the fourth theme is the major element in the composition, it is elaborated in the final verses of the prelude (40:12–26).

The succeeding chapters develop these themes often in a thoroughgoing mixture, but quite generally in distinct measures. The discerning of these passages in which one or another of the themes is the dominant note, may vary with different readers; but we feel that the analysis which we give will bear scrutiny without breaking down.

THEME 1. (40:1, 2) 42:18–25; 43:22–28; 44:21–23; 50:1–3; 51:21, 22; 54:1–10.

THEME 2. (40:3–5) 42:1–4; 49:1–7; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12.[3]

THEME 3. (40:6–8) 41:8–16; 44:1–5; 45:18–25; 50:10–51:8; 54:11–17.

THEME 4. (40:9–11) a. The mighty warrior, 41:1–5, 21–29; 42:10–17; 43:1–21; 44:24–45:17; 47:1–15; 48:1–22; 49:24–26; 51:9–52:12. b. The tender shepherd, 41:17–24; 42:5–9; 43:1–21; 44:6–20; 46:1–13; 48:1–22; 49:8–23.

FINALE completing all four themes: 55:1–13.

Quite generally it is recognized that the objective which this prophet-poet had in view, was that of arousing his fellow-countrymen who were in exile in Babylonia, to undertake the restoration of their national life. This involved departure from the rich and attractive region of Babylonia to the rather barren and relatively unattractive highlands of Judea. Only a compulsion of patriotic devotion coupled with religious zeal could be expected to secure such a migration. "Exile" contributed no small part of the impulse which led to the realization of the return from exile a few years later. Many other voices and many other active agents conspired to bring about the return, but the quality and color of "Exile's" poetry together with the amazing scope of his challenge make it not improbable that his influence was far from being the least among the levers which pried his countrymen out of their place beside the flesh-pots of Mesopotamia.

[3] It may be observed that this theme is developed in the so-called "Servant Songs."

The first theme which he sounds in his literary sonata is an affirmation that the sins which he and his immediate predecessors among the prophets felt to have been the cause of the deportation from Judah, had been forgiven and that God would make the way clear for a return.

THE RHAPSODY OF ZION'S WORLD MISSION

Prelude (40:1–26)

Theme the first: Penalties have been paid in full (40:1, 2)

"Console! Console my people,"
Your God is saying,
"To the heart of Jerusalem speak,
"And announce to her
"That her term has been served,
"She has paid the penalty;
"She has had at the hand of the Lord
"Retribution for all her sins."

The second theme as it is sounded in the prelude seems to be but a challenge to God's people to build an highway back to the homeland. When the subsequent passages are studied, however, the genius of this inspired leader discloses itself in that manner which gives to the last triad of lines in the announcement of the theme a startling significance. "Mankind assembled" is to behold not only the glory of the Lord marching his folk back to Zion, but through Zion to the uttermost parts of earth! The recognition of this splendid objective of "Exile" stimulated Dr. Paul Volz in the printing of his excellent commentary on this part of the book of Isaiah to have the printers set out in bold-faced type in the midst of ordinary print on a certain page the words "Er ist der erste Missionar geworden."[4] The highway of the Lord along which his people should march back to Zion is conceived as only part of a more magnificent way which shall summon the other peoples of earth also to march under the benignant sway of the God of all earth. The validity of this interpretation shall have further exposition at the proper place. Let us now hear the pronouncement of this theme so daring in terms which judiciously moderate the full significance of its challenging ultimate.

[4] P. Volz, Jesaia II. P. xviii.

THEME THE SECOND: Build a highway for the passage of the glory of the Lord (40:3–5)

Oh, hark! A herald! "In the desert
"Construct the way of the Lord;
"Make straight through the wilds a road for our God.
"Every hollow filled in must be;
"Every mountain and hill must be leveled;
"Till the steeps become a plain,
"And the ridges a vale.
"The Lord's glory shall then be revealed;
"Mankind assembled shall behold;
"For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

There follows straightway the announcement of the third theme which indicates the source whence shall come the inspiration and power to enable the exiled folk to fulfil the plan of the Lord. Here if anywhere shines forth the superb poetic skill of this prophet. He calls attention to the voice of an unidentified speaker who bids him be a herald calling the people to the task. In accents humanly dubious he laments the fragile beauty of the Lord's flower-like folk. Thereupon the summoning voice again is heard declaring that the word of God has power to accomplish that which the people alone might not find possible.

THEME THE THIRD: The word of the Lord has eternal power and that shall be the inspiration of his folk (40:6–8)

Oh, hark! One says, "Be a herald!"
Then say I, "Ah, what can I herald?
"All mankind is but grass;
"All its goodness like flowers of the field!
"Withers the grass; and the flowers droop
"When the breath of the Lord blows o'er them!
"The people are certainly grass!"

"Withers the grass; and the flowers droop;
"But the word of our God shall stand for ever."

In the fourth theme the common translations gloze over the summons of Zion to herald the coming of the omnipotent Lord to restore the cities of Judah. Zion indeed lay in ruins when the poet wrote. How then could he call the ruined city to proclaim the coming of God? The real Zion had not vanished. The real Zion still lived in the persons of her citizens, scattered though they were throughout the wide reaches of earth. In imagination which is quite natural to the poetic and the

religious spirit the prophet here as at intervals later in his work pictures Zion as a living reality. Hence we diverge from the usual idea in our rendering of this passage. It may be said further that the God whose coming is to be heralded by Zion appears as a mighty warrior against his foes, but as a tender shepherd toward his folk.

THEME THE FOURTH: Behold God on his way—by His might able to deliver, and by His mercy able to cherish (40:9–11)

To a mountain high get you up,
Blessed herald, Zion!
Uplift your voice with power,
Blessed herald, Jerusalem!
Uplift it! Fear not!
To the cities of Judah say,
"Behold your God!
"Behold, the Lord, even God!
"In might he comes
"With sovereign arm!
"Behold, he has his prize;
"His winnings he brings!
"Like a shepherd he feeds his flock;
"With his arm he herds them;
"The lambs he bears in his bosom,
"And guides their dams."

In the elaboration of this fourth theme "Exile" betrays the pure monotheism of his belief. No heathen deity has any reality in his mind, and he takes occasion to ridicule the ignorance and folly which sway the actions of such as bow down to idol forms. In the final verses of his familiar peroration he points his people to the infinite resource of the true God who has might sufficient to cope with any force in the universe and the inspiration to spur the weakest spirit to grand achievement. In our rendering we have followed the generally accepted opinion that verses 6 and 7 of chapter 41 belong between verses 19 and 20 of chapter 40. The explanation of this situation can be readily found in the commentaries.

Who measures the waters by handfuls,
Or metes the skies by spans?
Or gauges earth's dust in measures,
Or weighs in a balance the mountains,
The hills in scales?
Who has mastered the spirit of the Lord,
Or as his instructor has taught him?

From whom does he seek understanding,
Or instruction in paths of justice,
To give him knowledge,
And teach him the paths of sound judgment?
Lo, nations are drops on a bucket;
As motes on scales are they counted;
Lo, he scoops up islands as dust.
For fuel Lebanon is not enough;
Nor its beasts enough for a holocaust!
The sum of the nations is naught before him;
They are counted less than nothing and nullity!

Unto whom would you liken God;
Or beside him propose what counterpart?
The image an artisan casts?
A goldsmith plates it with gold!
(Here 41:6, 7 are inserted)
They all assist each other;
Each says to his fellow, "Lend a hand!"
The artisan aids the smith;
The peener, him who strikes the anvil.
He says of the junctures, "Perfect fit!"
He sets it with pins that it shift not.
Some wood that is sound he chooses,
And seeks out a capable workman
To set up an idol immovable!

Do you not know? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told to you from the first?
Have you not understood from earth's foundation?
He is throned o'er the circle of earth
Whose folk look like grasshoppers.
He raised the heavens like an awning;
Set them up like a tent to dwell in.
To naught he reduces potentates,
Makes rulers of earth amount to nothing.
They are barely planted, are barely sown,
Their stem has scarcely rooted in earth,
When he blows on them and they wither,
And a storm whisks them off like chaff.

"With whom would you match me as equal?"
Inquires his Holiness.
Lift up your eyes on high,
And see who created these!
He marshals their host by roster,
He calls them all by name!

By dint of his power,
His might puissant,
Not one is out of line!

Why, then, do you say, O Jacob,
And declare, O Israel,
"My path is beyond the Lord's ken;
"My just due is beyond my God's reach!"
Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The Lord is eternity's God,
Of earth's utmost bounds the Creator.
He is never weary; his strength wanes not;
His reason baffles research.
To the weary gives he strength;
He bestows fresh vigor on those without power.
Even youth may grow faint and weary;
And heroes stagger and stumble;
But the Lord's devoted increase in power;
They soar on wings as eagles;
They run and grow not weary;
They walk and do not faint.

* * * *

In passages of varied extent "Exile" proceeds to develop his message of inspiration to his fellow-countrymen for the undertaking of the evangelization of the world. We shall prefix to the successive sections a caption in which we shall give the gist of its thought and also an indication of our opinion as to the theme which gives the major tone to the passage. The poet does not allow the distinction between these themes to interfere with the progress of his urgent persuasive appeal, however, and the analysis which we make is far from compelling. The sequence is, however, divided into four prominent parts by the occurrence of outbursts of joy in the nature of chorales. These passages seem to indicate climaces in the scoring of the poet. These chorales divide the composition into four parts. The first part concludes with the chorale at 44:23; the second part extends from this point to the chorale at 49:13; the third part concludes with the rather long chorale in 52:7–12; while the fourth part comes to a climax of the whole with the brilliant finale of chapter 55.

The rhapsody begins with the announcement that the Lord has raised up a champion from the east who is coming to fulfil the deliverance of Israel, his servant. None of the impotent gods of the nations have been able to shape the destiny of men in this fashion. Here

shines out the clear monotheism of this prophet. The God of Israel is directing the course of all the nations. It will appear before the rhapsody is concluded that this God projects the salvation of the heathen quite as much as he purposes the redemption of Israel. In the promotion of this purpose of God the chief instrument is to be the chosen people, Israel; but this folk is obviously a weak and disloyal object. Here rises a problem which has involved a great deal of discussion by interpreters of the work of "Exile." The problem simmers down to the determination of the identity of the servant of the Lord. In our opinion the servant of the Lord is the people Israel throughout the rhapsody. The mass of this folk was doubtless of very poor spiritual quality such as to deserve the simile of "worm"; yet at the same time there was a nucleus in the nation upon which God could depend for the fulfilment of His purpose. In any group as in every individual the quality of character is mixed. The rich and contented merchants in Babylonia who were Jews by heredity provided a poor stuff for the making of missionaries to earth's distant frontiers; but of the same heredity stood forth men like "Exile" who were the very vehicles of the faith and its propagation. Israel included both. Why, then, need we wonder that at times the poet berates the nation for its laxity and incapacity, and then by shift of figures augurs the hope of true religion and its propagation to earth's ends through the same servant Israel? One has only to look within his own self to discover the fact upon which this paradox is built. We would wish to be judged by our better moments, yet must we confess to the deeds of our lapses.

As we read the opening lines of the rhapsody it appears that the earth's far bounds and all that is therein is the object of address. The announcement of the coming of the champion of God is made not with specific mention of his name. This revelation will come at a later and more auspicious moment.

I

God Moves to Bring True Religion to All the Earth 41:1–44:23

God announces an eastern champion (Theme IV) 41:1–5

Come silently to me, O frontiers!
You nations, renew your strength!
Let them come and then let them speak;
Let us seek a verdict together.

Who incited him from the east,
Whose feet success ever greets,
And renders nations to him,
Reduces kings . . .[5]
He pours forth his swords like dust,
And his bows he thrust forth like straw;
He pursues them, abolishing peace;
He follows no beaten track!
Who is he that has worked and wrought,
From the first defining eras?
It is I, the Lord, who am first;
At the last also I shall be first.
The frontiers see and fear;
The ends of the earth are awed.[6]

The Lord will make puny Israel a potent instrument
(Theme III) 41:8–16

You, therefore, my servant, Israel;
You, Jacob, whom I have chosen;
The seed of my intimate, Abraham,
Whom I have secured from the ends of earth,
And called from its confines;
You to whom I said, "My servant you are;
"You I chose, and reject not—"
Fear not, for I am with you;
Nor seek further, for I am your God.
I do strengthen, yea, help you;
In my right hand of victory hold you.
Behold, they are shamed and abashed,
All those who were enraged at you;
They come to naught and perish who strove with you.
You may seek and never find those who warred on you.
For I am the Lord, your God, who grasp your right hand,
Who say to you, "Fear not! 'Tis I that aid you."
Fear not, O Jacob, you worm;
O wormling, Israel!
"'Tis I that help you," says the Lord;
Your Kinsman is Israel's Holiness.[7]
Behold, I make of you a sharp thresher,
Quite new and furnished with spikes.
You shall thresh the mountains to powder;
The hills you shall render as chaff.
You shall toss them for the wind to bear off;
And storms shall scatter them far.
But you shall rejoice in the Lord;
And glory in Israel's Holiness.

[5] This verse is incomplete in the Hebrew.
[6] As previously noted 41:6,7 is transferred to follow 40:19.

The Lord's power can change desert to gardenland
(Theme IVb) 41 : 17–24

The poor and needy seek for water!
There's none! Their tongues are parched with thirst!
I myself, the Lord, will answer them;
The God of Israel does not fail them.
I will break open streams on the steppes,
And springs in the midst of plains.
I will turn the desert to water-pools;
A parched land to founts of water.
In the desert cedars I set,
Acacias, myrtles, and olive-trees.
In the wilderness fir-trees I place,
With plane-trees and box-trees together,
That they may see and know,
May observe and consider together
That the hand of the Lord did this,
And Israel's Holiness wrought it.

The theme of the inspiring power of God appears in this passage coupled with the figure of lovely gardens for the joy of his folk. This is but a variant in imagery upon the initial figure of the tender shepherd.

The impotent gods are challenged to match God's champion
(Theme IVa) 41 : 21–29

"Present your pleas," is the word of the Lord;
"Your arguments bring," is the word of the King of Jacob.
Let them come and declare to us the things which are imminent;
Declare the events of the past as they were that we may have them in mind.
Let us know their portent,
Or tell us what is coming.
Declare the events of the future that we may know you are gods!
Do something, or good or evil, at the sight of which we may marvel.
Less than naught are you;
Your deeds less than nothing!
Disgusting is he that seeks you!

I have aroused from the north one who comes;
From the sunrise I call him by name.
He treads down rulers like mud,
As the potter mashes the clay.

[7] A kinsman was under obligation to help a man in the folkways of ancient Israel.

Who foretold this that we might know;
Beforetime, that we might say, "True!"
Yea, none foretold it!
Yea, none announced it!
Yea, none heard you speak!
I first to Zion messengers,
To Jerusalem heralds would send!
I looked for, but found, none;
Of these not a prophet
To answer a word to my queries!
Lo, they are all evil!
Their deeds are void!
But wind and chaos their idols!

Along with the exaltation of the true God who is summoning his champion to do his will there is the counterpart of ridicule for the false gods and their devotees. In the wake of the champion whom we shall see is to deliver Israel from bondage, there moves forth Israel the servant of the Lord. Israel has been transformed from weakness to power and is commissioned of God to spread the true religion to earth's frontiers. "Exile" employs many old words in new fashion. In the list of such there is none which is more significant than the word which we are about to render "religion." It is the word *mishpat* in Hebrew. We cannot enter into the argument in defense of this meaning; but we do not trace to "Exile" the first employment of it in this sense instead of its more usual meaning of "justice." This is the word which Jeremiah employed in a brilliant passage which describes religion as the instinct of the soul (Jer. 8:7) set forth in likeness to the migratory instinct in birds. In the passage to follow which is widely known as the "First Servant Song," we also modify the text of the Hebrew by inserting the words "Jacob" and "Israel" in the first verse. In this we are following the lead of the Greek Version. When we come to translate the second of these servant songs (49:3) we shall find the names in the Hebrew text but not in the Greek! In that passage many translators would excise the names on the ground that they do not occur in the Greek. Unfortunately they do not return to the first servant song in all cases and restore them to the Hebrew by testimony of the Greek. We are persuaded that the servant of the Lord is the nation in the mind of "Exile." The mode by which the servant of the Lord is to propagate the true religion is notable. It will not be by preaching, but by living. The tender solicitude of his life

for the weak and the needy shall win them to faith in his God. This is the true genius of missionary service in all parts.

The ultimate task of Israel is to bring religion to all earth
(Theme II) 42:1–4

Lo, my servant, Jacob uphold I;
My heart delights in my chosen one, Israel.
I confer my spirit upon him
To the nations to spread religion.
He shouts not, nor rants;
His voice he spreads not abroad.
A bruised reed he destroys not;
Nor quenches the dimmest wick;
He loyally spreads religion.
He burns not dimly, nor is bruised,
Till he gives religion to earth;
The frontiers await his teaching.

The Lord is to make his servant, Israel, a deliverer
(Theme IVb) 42:5–9

The word of God, the Lord, is this,
Who created the heavens and spread them,
Who modeled the earth and its produce,
Who gave breath to the people upon it,
And spirit to those who walk there;
"The Lord am I who call you in honor and give you my hand;
"I made and do give you, a pledge to nations,
"A light to aliens;
"To open the eyes of the blind.
"To liberate captives from dungeons,
"From prisons dark the inmates.
"The Lord am I. That is my name.
"My glory I share with none,
"Nor my praise with idols.
"The former state, lo, it returns;
"And new things I am proclaiming;
"Before they occur I foretell them to you."

God's might is supreme, and none can prevent his deliverance
(Theme IVa) 42:10–17

Oh, sing to the Lord a song, a new one!
Sing his praise from the bounds of earth!
Let the sea and its fullness shout,
The isles and their folk!

Let the desert rejoice and its towns,
The encampments where Kedar dwells!
Let the cliff-dwellers shout aloud,
From the mountain peaks exult!
Let them give to the Lord the glory,
And proclaim his praise on the marches!
The Lord steps forth as a hero,
As a warrior rouses his ardor.
He shouts, yea, he cheers;
On his foes proves his might.

"I have long been silent;
"I have held myself mute.
"As in travail I groan;
"I am breathing hard and fast.
"The mountains and hills I lay waste;
"I sere all their grass.
"I make the rivers dry;
"And drain the ponds.
"I will lead the blind by a way unfamiliar;
"By paths unfamiliar will guide them.
"I will flood the dark spots with light,
"And straighten before them the winding.
"Such things as this will I do;
"I will not forsake them.
"They are forced to retreat;
"They are put to deep shame who trust in idols,
"Who say to images, 'You are our gods!' "

Servant Israel's pitiful state was due to its sins, now forgiven
(Theme I) 42:18–25

"You deaf, give ear!
"You blind, look up and see!
"Who is blind as my servant is,
"Or deaf as the herald I send!
"Who is blind as he whom I send;
"As blind as the Lord's own servant!
"He sees many things, but observes not;
"His open ears do not hear!"

The Lord is pleased for his victory's sake;
He exalts and honors his teaching;
But this is a people robbed and plundered,
In caves are all of them sheltered,
And hidden away in prisons!
Regarded as booty, none did guard them;
As plunder, said none, "Give them back!"

Among you who gives ear to this,
Or heeds and will hearken hereafter?
Who was it let Jacob be plunder,
And Israel, booty?
Was it not the Lord against whom they sinned;
In whose ways they would not walk;
To whose will they would not bow?
Till he poured on them the heat of his ire,
And the fury of war,
Which set them all ablaze unawares,
And consumed who took it not to heart.

We made bold to add the phrase "now forgiven" to the caption of the preceding passage, not because that feature appears in the passage but because it is justified by the lines with which we are about to deal. The poet swings out now upon a splendid and rather extended flight of exaltation of the glory of the God of his salvation in which the elements of the warrior and the shepherd are skillfully blended. The reader must be impressed with the vigor of God against those who set themselves against him together with the tenderness of his love for those who honor him with loyal service. Thus the reader is prepared for the succeeding passage in which the proclamation is made that Israel is now fully forgiven for sins past. (43:22–28) The punishment was meted out for sin, while the forgiveness is the fruit of repentance.

The Lord is mighty to save and to bless
(Theme IV) 43:1–21

Now, therefore, thus says the Lord,
Your Creator, O Jacob,
Your Maker, O Israel:
Fear not, for I stand by you;
I call you by name; you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, with you am I;
Through rivers, they'll not submerge you.
When you walk through fire, you'll not burn yourself;
The flame shall not scorch you.
For I am the Lord, your God;
Your savior is Israel's Holiness.
I will pay as your ransom Egypt;
Also Cush in your stead and Seba.
Because in my sight you are precious,
You are honored and I do love you.

I will give other men in your stead,
And nations in exchange for your life.
Have no fear for with you am I.
From the east will I bring your children;
From the west assemble you.
I will say to the north, "Give them up!"
To the south, "Hold not back!"
Bring home my sons from afar,
My daughters from earth's last reaches,
All those who are named by my name,
Whom I made for my glory,
Whom I shaped, yea, formed.
Bring forth the blind folk with eyes,
The deaf who yet have ears!
Let all nations be gathered together,
The peoples be assembled!
Who among them could foretell this,
Or give us predictions?
Let them bring their witness and prove it;
Let them hear, and then say, "'Tis true."

"My witnesses you," the Lord's edict,
"And my servants whom I have chosen,
"That you may know and believe me,
"May realize I am he!
"Before me was no god formed,
"Nor will any be after me.
"I, even I, am the Lord;
"Beside me there is no savior.
"I foretold, and saved;
"'Twas I spoke, no stranger among you.
"And my witnesses you." The Lord's edict.
"Yea, I am God;
"Even I am he from of old.
"From my hand there is none who snatches;
"When I do something who can thwart it?"

This is what the Lord says,
Your Redeemer, Israel's Holiness:
"For your sake I send to Babylon,
"And reduce them all to fugitives;
"The Chaldeans in ships shall be bound.
"The Lord am I, your Holiness,
"Creator of Israel, your King."

This is what the Lord says,
Who makes a path through the sea,
A way through mighty waters;

Who brings on chariots and horse,
An army and might, together—
They lie there ne'er to rise;
They are quenched like a wick, extinguished![8]
"Recall no more the past;
"Give no thought to the bygone;
"Behold, I work something new;
"'Tis budding now! Do you not know it?
"Yea, I make a way through the desert;
"Through the waste, river-courses.
"The beasts of the wild do me honor,
"The jackals and ostriches,
"For I make in the desert streams,
"Through the waste, river-courses,
"To give drink to my chosen folk,
"A folk that I made for myself;
"They shall sound my praise."

God has forgiven Israel's sins (Theme I) 43:22–28

"You call not on me, O Jacob!
"Yea, of me are you weary, O Israel!
"You bring me not sheep, your offerings;
"With sacrifice honor me not!
"I made you not slaves to offerings;
"I wearied you not with incense.
"You buy no sweet-cane for me with silver;
"Nor sate me with fat of sacrifice.
"With your sins you've enslaved me;
"With misdeeds have wearied me.
"'Tis I, 'tis I who blot out your trespasses;
"'Tis like me to recall not your sins.
"Aid my mem'ry to mutual judgment;
"Tell the tale yourselves for vindication.
"Your father of old did trespass;
"Your interpreters sinned against me;
"So the holy princes I violated;
"I put Jacob under the ban,
"And Israel to scorn."

God will rally Israel by his life-giving spirit (Theme III) 44:1–5

"Now then, give heed, O Jacob, my servant,
"And Israel whom I chose.
"The Lord, your Maker, has this to say,
"Your Creator, your Aid since birth.

[8] This is an allusion to the deliverance from Egypt.

"Have no fear, my servant, Jacob;
"O Jeshurun, whom I chose,
"For water I'll pour on the thirsty,
"Trickling rills on dry earth.
"I will pour o'er your children my spirit,
"O'er your babes my blessing.
"Your sons shall grow up like grass,
"Like willows by water-ditches.
"The one shall say, 'I belong to the Lord;'
"Another shall name himself Israel."

The Lord eternal is potent to save his folk; but idols are naught (Theme IVb) 44:6–20

The Lord, the King of Israel, says,
The Lord of hosts, his Redeemer,
"I am the First;
"I am the Last;
"There is no God but I.
"Who, then, like me shall stand forth and speak,
"And foretell it, describing it to me?
"Who has told from of old things to come,
"Or proclaimed the events of the future to you?
"Have no fear; be not affrighted.
"Did I not declare and foretell it long since?
"And you are my witnesses.
"Is there a God beside me?
"None is a Rock. I know none."

The makers of idols are all of them void;
Their adored can do nothing;
Their devout, even they, cannot see;
They have not the sense to feel shame.
Whoever has made a god, or an idol,
Has cast a thing of no power.
Behold, all their fellows are shamed;
They who make them are but men.
Let them all assemble and stand forth;
Let them fear and be shamed together.

The worker in iron sharpens the axe;
He works in the coals, and with hammer shapes it;
He forms it with arm of might.
He is hungry and also loses his might;
No water he drinks and is faint.
The worker in wood portrays the lines,
Gives it shape with the pencil.

He makes it with drawplanes,
With compasses shapes it.
He gives it the form of a man,
With human grace to dwell in a house,
He hews for his purpose cedars;
He takes a plane-tree or oak.
He secures some trees of the forest;
He plants a cedar, and rain makes it grow.
They are used by man for fuel;
One takes of them and is warmed.
Now he kindles it to bake bread;
Now makes he a god to bow to;
He makes it an image and worships it!
One half he burns in the fire;
On the coals some flesh he roasts;
He eats of the roast and is sated;
Yea, he basks and says, "Aha,
"I am warm, I have seen the fire."
With the rest he makes a god;
He bows to his idol and worships it.
He prays unto it,
And says, Oh, save me,
"For thou art my god."
They lack sense and insight,
For their eyes are besmeared and sightless;
Their mind is ignorant.
None gives it a thought;
There's no sense or insight to say,
"A half I burned in the fire;
"Yea, I baked some bread on its coals;
"I roasted flesh and did eat.
"Of the rest I made the odious;
"To a block of wood I bow."
Feeding on ashes, a mind deceived perverts him;
He cannot save his soul, nor say,
"Holds not my right hand delusion?"

In contrast to idols God speaks to his folk forgiveness
(Theme I) 44:21, 22

"Recall your God, O Jacob,
"And Israel, for you are my servant.
"I formed you. My servant are you.
"O Israel, you I'll forget not.
"Like clouds I blot out your trespasses,
"Like mists, your sins.
"Turn to me, for I redeem you."

Chorale. (Conclusion of the first rhapsody)

Exult, O heavens, for the Lord is at work!
Shout aloud, O depths of earth!
Raise paeans of joy, O mountains,
O forest, and all trees therein!
For the Lord has redeemed Jacob;
Wins glory through Israel.

II

God Is About to Break All Heathen Might and Bring His Folk Back Home
44:24–49:13

The mysterious champion of God is Cyrus designated the deliverer of Israel (Theme IVa) 44:24–45:17

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,
From your birth your Maker,
"The Lord am I, Creator of all,
"Alone stretching out the heavens,
"The earth by myself outspreading;
"Confounding the omens of oracles,
"And making fools of diviners;
"Putting to rout the wise,
"Making foolish their wisdom;
"Confirming the word of my servant,
"Fulfilling the forecasts of messengers.
"I say to deep ocean, 'Go dry!'
" 'Your floods I drain dry!'
"I say to Cyrus, 'My shepherd!'
"He completes my purposes;
"To Jerusalem say I, 'Be built!'
"To the temple, 'Be founded!' "

"The Lord has this to say of his messiah,
"Of Cyrus whose right hand I hold;
"Before him beating down nations,
"I ungird the loins of kings;
"Before him opening doors,
"The portals shall not be closed.
" 'Tis I who go before you;
"The ranges I level.
"I shatter gates of bronze;
"And sunder iron bars.

"I give you the hoards of the dark,
"And treasures secreted,
"That you may know that I am the Lord,
"Who calls you by name, the God of Israel.
"For the sake of my servant, Jacob,
"And Israel, my choice,
"I call on you by name,
"Though you know me not, I betitle you.
"The Lord am I. There's no other.
"Beside me there is no God.
"I aid you who know me not,
"That men may know from the rising sun,
"From the sunset, too, there is none but I.
"The Lord am I. There is no other.
"The Maker of light,
"Creator of darkness;
"The Maker of peace,
"Creator of ill;
"The Lord am I;
"I do it all.
"O heavens above, drop your showers!
"Let the skies rain down the right!
"Let the earth open up,
"And produce salvation!
"Let the triumph of right sprout also!
"Even I, the Lord, create this."

What! Does one strive with his Maker!
A potsherd 'mid potsherds of earth!
May the clay inquire of its moulder, "What make you?"
Or your work say, "You have no hands?"
What! Does one say to a father, "What get you?"
Or to a woman, "What conceive you?"

The Lord has this to say,
The Holy One of Israel,
Who shapes the future,
"Ask you me of my children,
"Or direct you me on my handiwork?
"I have made the earth;
"And men thereon I created.
"My own hands spread out the heavens;
"I command all the host thereof.
" 'Tis I for the right have aroused him,
"And direct his every step.
"My city shall he rebuild;
"My exiles shall he release.

"Not for a price;
"And not for a ransom."
The Lord of hosts is speaking.

The Lord of hosts has this to say,
"The toilers of Egypt,
"The traders of Cush
"Gigantic Sabaeans also,
"Unto you shall they come,
"Shall belong to you;
"After you shall they go in chains.
"Unto you shall they bow;
"Unto you shall they pray,
"'Assuredly God is with you!
"'There is no other;
"'No other God!
"'Of a truth with you is a God mysterious,
"'The God of Israel, Savior!'"
Be shamed and confounded all you who hate him;
Walk disgraced who fashion images.
Israel is saved by the Lord with a lasting deliverance;
They shall know neither shame nor disgrace for evermore.

Israel must have faith in God, true source of power
(Theme III) 45:18–25

For this has the Lord to say,—
Creator of heaven, he is true God,
Shaper of earth, its Maker, he was its Builder;
No void did he make it;
He shaped it for dwellings—
"The Lord am I;
"There is no other.
"I have not spoken in secret,
"In some dark recess of earth.
"I said not to Jacob's race,
"'In the void seek me out.'
"The Lord am I,
"Who speak the truth,
"Proclaiming justice.
"Assemble! Approach!
"Draw near together!
"You, released by the nations!
"They who bear their wooden image are ignorant;
"They are praying to gods unable to save.
"Sound the word! Draw near!
"Yea, take counsel together!

"Who was it announced this of old;
"Long since foretold it?
"Was it not I, the Lord?
"No other god but I?
"A God who is just, a Savior;
"None other than I?
"Oh, turn unto me and be saved, far reaches of earth,
"For I am God, and there is no other.
"For I have vowed by myself;
"From my mouth has surety issued,
"A word that shall not be voided,
"That to me every knee must bow,
"Every tongue make its vow."

In the Lord alone is for man moral triumph and strength;
Unto him shall come in disgrace all those hostile to him;
In the Lord shall all Israel's race find triumph and exultation.

In this second movement of the rhapsody the matters which were treated somewhat obscurely and generally in the first, are rendered in clearer light and in specific terms. The mysterious champion of God as we have seen is here declared to be Cyrus; in the succeeding passages we shall find the derision of heathen gods in general made specific in the ridicule of Bel and Nebo of Babylon. Thereupon the trend of thought picks up the humiliation of Israel in former days because of its sins. The counterpart of this is found in the reduction of the delicate lady Babylon to slavery for her sins. The artistry of such a mode is apparent in the creation of a growing impression which is made deeper with the thought of the successive cycles which differ in color even while they deal with the same materials.

Idol gods have to be carried; but the true God bears his folk in his arms and calls a messiah to save them
(Theme IVb) 46:1–13

Bel bows down!
Nebo bends low!
Their idols are placed on beasts, on cattle!
What you bore is a pack-load;
For the weary, a burden!
They bend low; they stoop together;
They cannot save themselves;
Off they go to captivity!

"Listen to me, O house of Jacob,
"And all who are left of the house of Israel,
"A load borne from the womb,
"A burden from birth!
"To old age the same will I be;
"Till hair is grey will I carry.
" 'Twas I who made;
" 'Tis I who carry;
"Yes, I will bear, and save.
"To whom will you liken and match me,
"Or comparing with me find resemblance?
"They pour out gold from a sack;
"And weigh out silver in scales;
"They hire a goldsmith;
"He makes it a god!
"They bow down, even worship!
"They bear it on their shoulders; they carry it;
"They set it in place! There it stands!
"From its niche it stirs not!
"Yea, one cries unto it without answer;
"From his trouble it saves him not.
"Remember this and take courage!
"Transgressors take it to heart!

"Remember the ancient past,
"For I am God; there's no other;
"A God with none who is like me,
"Foretelling the end from the first,
"And long since things not yet wrought.
"I say my purpose shall stand;
"Whatever I choose I will do.
"I call from the east a falcon;
"From a distant land the man of my choice.
"What I say, I accomplish;
"What I plan, I do.
"Give heed to me, you downhearted,
"Who are far from triumph!
"I bring near my triumph! 'Tis not far!
"My salvation shall not tarry!
"I am giving deliverance in Zion
"To Israel, my pride."

Lady Babylon dethroned is enslaved in spite of her sorceries
(Theme IVa) 47:1–15

"Down with you! Sit in the dust,
"O princess Babylon!
"Get down on the ground off the throne,

"O lady Chaldea!
"No more shall anyone call you
"Tender and dainty.
"Lay hold of the handmill,
"And grind the meal!
"Strip off your veils;
"Remove your robes!
"Strip to the thigh!
"Wade in the streams!
"Be stripped stark naked!
"Your disgrace be seen!
"I am taking vengeance;
"I spare no person,"
Declares our Redeemer,
The Lord of hosts by name,
The Holiness of Israel.
"Sit down in silence!
"Pass on in gloom,
"O lady Chaldea!
"No more shall anyone call you,
" 'Imperial Majesty!'
"I was wroth with my folk;
"I profaned my heritage;
"To your hands I gave them.
"You showed no mercy to them;
"On the aged you laid a yoke most heavy.
"You said, 'Immortal am I,
" 'Eternal Majesty!'
"You took not these things to heart;
"Took no thought of their issue."

At this point it may be well to call the reader's attention to the connection between this passage and the great climax in the fifty-third chapter where all the heathen nations in imagination of the poet unite in testimony that they have discerned in the suffering of Israel for its sins their own obligation to repent and serve the true God. This passage concerning Babylon is closer to the stark reality that the heathen nations like Babylon never did see that point. Here Babylon is being punished for its sins; in the chorus of nations Babylon's voice may be supposed to join in that later passage which is born of the poet's hope and expectancy of final redemption of all earth. That which appears to be a paradox is due to the contrast in the actual as over against the expectant hope. This paradox is resolved when we observe that the thoughts of the poet move along in sequence from actuality to the picturings of faith and hope.

"Now then, heed this, voluptuous,
"Lolling at ease,
"With pensive word,
" 'Just I! There is no other!
" 'I shall ne'er be widowed,
" 'Nor know bereavement.'
"There shall fall on you in an instant these very two things;
"In a single day bereavement and widowhood!
"In full force shall they fall upon you in the wealth of your spells,
"In the might of your potent magic;
"As you trust in your wickedness,
"As you say, 'No one sees me.'
"Your wisdom and knowledge, these mislead you,
"As you say in your heart, 'Just I! There's no other.'
"So there comes disaster upon you;
"You know not its counter-spell.
"There falls upon you ruin;
"You cannot avert it.
"There comes upon you suddenly
"Unforeseen calamity.
"Pray, stand forth with your magic,
"And the wealth of your spells,
"In which you have toiled from your youth.
"Perchance you may prevail;
"Perchance inspire awe.
"You are tired of your many projects;
"Let them stand forth and save you,
"Who map the heavens,
"Who scan the stars,
"Making known new things
"Which are coming upon you.
"Behold, they are but stubble;
"A fire consumes them.
"They cannot save their own lives
"From the hand of the flames,
"No coals these to warm them!
"No fire to sit before!
"Such for you those for whom you labored,
"Your associates from your youth!
"They all stagger their several ways;
"No one is your savior!"

In sharp contrast with the impotence of the magicians and astrologers of heathen rites with which Babylon was certainly rich, we now proceed with the prophet's assurance of the power of the true God who is on his way to save his people. We shall see that this salvation is based

upon the vindication of the moral qualities of the true God whose folk have not adequately shown forth the same moral qualities, but have brought shame upon the religion which demands moral conduct in its devotees.

Not for Israel's virtue, but for his own majesty God sends his messiah to deliver Israel
(Theme IV) 48:1–22

Hearken to this, O house of Jacob,
Who call themselves by the name of Israel,
Who were born from the body of Judah,
Who take oath by the name of the Lord,
And invoke the God of Israel,
But not in truth and honesty,
When they call themselves from the holy city,
And rely on the God of Israel.
The Lord of hosts is his name!
"Former things I foretold long before;
"From my mouth they went; I proclaimed them.
"All at once I wrought; they took place.
"Yea, I knew that you were stubborn;
"Your neck was of iron sinews;
"Your brow was brazen.
"So I forecast to you of old;
"Before the event I advised you,
"Lest you say, 'My idol did it;
" 'My image, my god, ordained it.'
"You have heard of this every whit;
"But you are not forecasting.
"Now I tell you of new events,
"Of things secret, unknown to you.
"They are now taking shape, not of old;
"You have never heard of them,
"Lest you say, 'Behold, I knew.'
"You neither heard, nor knew;
"Your ear was not opened of old.
"For I knew you were utterly faithless;
"A born transgressor they called you.
"True to myself, long-suffering was I;
"I hampered my praise by not cutting you off.
"Lo, my smelting you brought no silver;
"I tried you in crucibles of anguish.
"For my sake, for my sake I'm working,
"For oh, but my name is sullied!
"I'll not yield my honor to others."

To one who recalls the work of the prophets before "Exile" these lines will not be obscure. Even through Amos and Hosea there had come warnings to Israel that sin spelled doom. Jeremiah also had stood out before the folk disloyal to the moral demands of the moral God and had warned them of the doom which was inevitable. Now another prophet comes with a forecast of deliverance, but without a line in which the moral demand is mitigated or relaxed. Those who answer the call of God must realize that this involves devotion to righteousness.

"Give heed to me, O Jacob,
"And Israel, my elect!
"I am, I am the First;
"I am also the Last.
"Yea, my hand laid earth's foundation;
"My right hand outspread the skies.
"When I spoke forth unto them,
"They stood together."

Assemble! All of you hearken!
Who among you foretold these things?
The Lord loves him;
He shall work his will
On Babel and Chaldea's race.

"'Tis I, 'tis I who speak, yea, call him;
"I lead him, and prosper his course.
"Draw near to me! Hear this!
"From the first I spoke not secretly;
"At the time things took place, there was I."

Yea, now the Lord, even God,
Sends him forth and his spirit.
The Lord, your Redeemer, has this to say,
The Holiness of Israel,
"The Lord am I, your God,
"Who teaches success,
"Who guides in the way you should go.
"If you had but followed my orders,
"Your peace would be like a river,
"Like ocean waves your triumph.
"Your race could be numbered as sand,
"As its grains your bodies' offspring;
"Not cut off, nor erased, your name before me."

Go forth from Babel,
Away from Chaldeans!

With exultant voice proclaim and tell this;
Shout it forth to the ends of earth;
Declaim that the Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob.
They thirsted not as he led them o'er the wastes;
He flowed water for them from the rock;
The rock he split, and water gushed forth.
There's no peace, the Lord declares, for the wicked!

This last line has given question to many interpreters, and some feel that it is a pietistic annotation. The line is, however, authentic. It stands as a check on that which has been said. The wicked, whether they be of the supposedly loyal folk or of heathen heritage, the wicked have no peace. Israel should be painfully aware of this even while Israel is about to receive deliverance by the help of God.

We come now to the second of those passages which are known as the "servant songs." In this "song" Israel is portrayed as making the discovery that true religion has survived the catastrophe of the exile. All the labor of the centuries precedent had not gone for nothing with the crash of national life and the destruction of the temple with its cultus. Israel still had God and should ideally be aware of the spiritual essential in religion which still was available. In the atmosphere of this discovery servant Israel receives the commission to evangelize the world. We restored the words "Jacob" and "Israel" in the first "song" (42:1), because it seems clear that "Exile" had the people in mind as the Lord's servant, and not merely because these names are to be found in the Greek version. In this second "song" the names are existent in the Hebrew text. The general theme of the rhapsody as a whole requires that the nation be regarded as the servant, whether the objective of the rallying call be considered to be the restoration of Zion, or the larger challenge of carrying the true religion to all earth.

By bitter experience the Lord's servant has learned the spiritual nature of true religion and is commissioned to proclaim it to the ends of earth (Theme II) 49:1–7

Oh, hearken to me, frontiers!
Give heed, you distant peoples!
From birth did the Lord elect me;
From my mother's bosom my name he cherished.
He has made my mouth a sword so sharp;
In the shade of his hand he hides me.
He has made me an arrow so polished;
In his quiver he stores me.

He declares to me, "My servant are you
"By whom I'll get glory, O Israel!"
But I then said, "In vain have I toiled;
"For naught and a breath have I spent my strength.—
"And yet with the Lord is my religion;
"My increment is with my God."

It is in these last four lines that we detect the terse statement of a most significant discovery on the part of servant Israel. It is, of course, the ideal element in the nation, the discerning minds that can see the survival of the real and spiritual elements of the true religion which do not consist in ritual or in the ceremonial of the shrine. The ruined temple does not spell a ruined religion. Judah did as a matter of fact discover this and as a consequence there grew up the modes of personal prayer and the ultimate habits of the synagogues where religion was quite apart from the cultus. The increment of lasting worth which remained after the catastrophic demise of the nation and its apparatus of religion was in fact the spiritual product which had been in the making through all the centuries before.

Now, therefore, declares the Lord
Who made me his servant from birth,
To turn back Jacob to him,
And that Israel be won to him,
That honor be mine with the Lord,
And my God might become my strength,
"'Tis too simple for you my servant to be
"To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
"To restore the survivors of Israel;
"I give you as light to the nations,
"To become my salvation to earth's far bounds."

The Lord has this to say,
The Redeemer of Israel, his Holiness,
To an object of mockery,
To the scorn of nations,
To the servant of tyrants,
"Kings shall rise to their feet when they see,
"And princes do homage,
"For the sake of the Lord who is loyal,
"The Holiness of Israel who chose you."

Although the spreading of the true religion to the ends of the earth and to heathen nations is the ultimate objective of the deliverance of Israel, yet the first step is that of the restoration of the homeland, the

building of the way back home. Thus the second rhapsody now recoils from the worldwide vision to the immediate step of the restoration of Zion.

God is shepherding Israel back home after deliverance (Theme IVb) 49:8–23

The Lord has this to say,
"In time of grace will I answer,
"In the day of salvation will help you.
"I will guard you, and make you a pledge for the nation,
"To restore the land, to inherit the desolate heritage.
"To say to captives, 'Go free!'
"To those in darkness, 'Show yourselves!'
"By every road shall they graze;
"On every hillside find pasturage.
"They shall hunger not; they shall thirst not;
"Nor shall smite them the heat, nor the sun;
"For one kind to them shall lead them,
"And guide them by bubbling waters.
"I will make o'er my hills a road;
"My highways shall rise.
"Behold, some are coming from far away;
"Lo, others come from the north and the west;
"And others from Syene land."

Chorale (concluding the second rhapsody)
Shout aloud, O heavens!
Exult, O earth!
Raise paeans of joy, O mountains!
For the Lord to his folk is consoling;
He is kind to his afflicted.

III

Zion, Dazed by Her Punishment, Can Believe in Her Deliverance Only with Difficulty 49:14–52:12

Zion protests that God forsook her; but the Lord affirms that he is now restoring her (Theme IVb) 49:14–23

But Zion protests,
"The Lord forsook me!
"The Lord forgot me!"

"Can a woman forget her babe;
"Show no love for her body's son!
"Even such may forget;
"But not I forget you.
"Behold, on my hands I have etched you;
"Your walls are before me always.
"Your children speed home;
"Your destroyers and wasters depart from you
"Uplift your eyes and look around;
"All these are thronging to come to you!
"As I live," declares the Lord,
"You shall dress you with them as with jewels,
"As a bride shall you wear them.
"Yea, your ruins and wastes,
"And the land of your tragedy
"Shall now be too strait for its folk,
"And your raiders be far away.
"Even yet shall say in your hearing
"Those children you lost,
" 'Too strait the place!
" 'Make room for my home!'
"You shall say in your heart,
" 'Who bore these to me,
" 'Bereaved and barren me?
" 'And these! Who brought them up?
" 'Lo, I was left alone,
" 'And these—wherever were they?' "

The Lord, even God, has this to say,
"Behold, I lift my hands to nations,
"And to peoples raise my signal.
"They bring your sons in their bosoms,
"Your daughters are borne on their shoulders.
"Yea, kings are your foster-fathers,
"Your nurses are princesses.
"They shall bow their heads to the earth,
"And kiss the dust at your feet.
"You shall know that I am the Lord,
"They that wait on whom know no shame."

The Lord declares that no foe is so mighty as to hinder him from saving his folk (Theme IVa) 49:24–26

"Can the warrior's prize be taken,
"The tyrant's captives freed?"

Yea, this has the Lord to say,
"E'en the warrior's prize can be taken,

"And the tyrant's captives be freed.
"'Tis I who strive with your foes;
"'Tis I who save your children.
"I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh;
"They'll be drunk as with wine on their blood.
"And all flesh shall know that I am the Lord,
"Your Savior, Redeemer, the Champion of Jacob."

The edge of this passage which borders on the bloodthirsty is turned by the realization that the poet intends to say that if foes are bloodthirsty, they shall not drink the blood of the Lord's folk but be sated with their own. Their ferocity is to be turned on themselves.

God declares that he did not cast off his folk, but that their sins brought the blight from which he is delivering them
(Theme I) 50:1–3

The Lord has this to say,
"Where now is the writ of divorce with which I sent her away?
"Or to which of my creditors was it I sold you?
"Lo, for guilt of yours were you sold;
"For your sins was your mother divorced.
"Ah, why did I come but to find no one;
"Why answered none when I called?
"Is my hand too short to redeem;
"Is there in me no power to save?
"Behold, with my chiding I dry up seas;
"Into deserts I render streams;
"Their fish shrivel up for lack of water;
"They die of thirst.
"I clothe the heavens with gloom,
"And cover them over with sackcloth."

God's true servant has learned through suffering how to reveal true religion with humility indomitable
(Theme II) 50:4–9

The Lord, even God, has given me a disciple's tongue,
To know how to speak to the weary a word.
He wakens at morn, he wakens my ear to hear as a disciple.
The Lord, even God, awakens my ear.
And I am not rebellious;
I do not turn away.
My back I bowed to the floggers;
My cheek to pluckers.
My face I did not hide
From shame and spitting.

But the Lord, even God, gives me aid, and so I feel not disgrace;
So I set my face like a flint, and know I must not feel shame.
My Redeemer is near. Who then is my foe? Let us stand face to face!
Who controls my destiny? Let him but face me!
Lo, the Lord, even God, gives me aid. Who then condemns me?
Lo, they all wear out like garments, and moths consume them.

At this point the poet swings into an irregular dialogue which can be detected by the change of pronominal forms and by other indications which careful scrutiny makes clear. For the sake of the casual reader, however, it may be helpful if the shift in speakers is indicated.

God is the source of power for the task of giving true religion to all earth (Theme III) 50:10–51:8

PROPHET:
Who among you reveres the Lord,
And heeds the voice of his servant;
But walks amid the shadows
With never a gleam on him?
Let him trust in the name of the Lord;
Let him lean on his God.
Lo, all you kindlers of fire
Who gird you with firebrands,
Walk on in the light of your fires,
And burn up the brands.[9]

GOD:
From my hand shall this be your fate—
You shall lie in torture.

PROPHET:
Give heed to me, you who chase after triumph,
You who seek the Lord!
Look you to the rock you were cut from,
To the hole of the pit you were dug from;
Look you to your father, Abraham,
And to Sarah who bore you.

GOD:
Yea, just one I called him
To bless and increase him.

PROPHET:
Yea, the Lord is consoling to Zion;

[9] This is an allusion to forms of heathen worship in which rites of fire were involved. Such fires are useless to give guiding light for unlike the light of God these fires will burn out.

He consoles all her ruin;
He will make her desert an Eden,
Her waste like a park of the Lord.
Jubilation and joy shall be found in her,
Thanksgiving and melody of song.

GOD:
Give attention to me, my people!
Give ear to me, my nation!
For instruction goes forth from me;
My religion I cause to give light to nations.
My triumph is near;
My salvation goes forth;
My arm controls the nations.
For me the frontiers are waiting;
They long for my arm.
Lift up your eyes to the heavens;
Regard the earth below!
Yea, the heavens shall dissolve like clouds;
And the earth wear out like a robe;
Its inhabitants die like gnats;
But my saving shall be for ever;
My triumph shall not be broken.
Give heed to me you who know the right,
The folk in whose heart is my teaching!
Fear not the scorn of man,
Nor give way to their taunts!
For moths shall consume them like clothing;
And worms shall consume them like wool;
But my triumph shall be for ever,
My saving for long generations.

Zion, bemused with woe, is persuaded of God's power to deliver her and restore her glory (Theme IVa) 51:9–52:12

ZION:
Awake! Awake, and don thy might,
O arm of the Lord!
Awake as in days of yore,
In ancient generations!
Art thou not he who cut Rahab to bits and pierced the Dragon?
Art thou not he who dried up the Sea and the waters of Great Abyss?
Who made the depths of the sea a way
For the feet of the ransomed?
Then the Lord's redeemed shall return,
And come to Zion exulting;

Be eternal joy o'er their heads,
Good cheer and rejoicing o'ertake them,
And sorrow and sighing flee.

GOD:
'Tis I, 'tis I am he who consoles you.
Who are you to be fearful of mortal man,
Of humankind that is counted as grass?
You forget the Lord, your Maker,
Who spread the heavens,
Who laid earth's foundation,
And tremble all day long
Before the wrath of the tyrant;
And when he is set to destroy—
Then where is the wrath of the tyrant?
The burdened rush to be freed;
They sink not to death in the pit;
They suffer not want of bread.
'Tis I am the Lord, your God,
Arousing the sea,
Till its billows roar;
The Lord of hosts is my name.
I put my words in your mouth;
In the shade of my hand I hide you,
Spreading out the heavens,
Laying earth's foundation,
And saying to Zion, "My folk you are."

PROPHET:
Wake yourself! Wake yourself!
Stand up, O Jerusalem,
Who had to drink at the hand of the Lord
The cup of his wrath!
The vial of wrath,
The cup of staggering,
You have drunk, you have drained!
There is none to guide her of all the sons she bore!
There is none to take her by hand of all the sons she reared!
Twofold the things that befell you!
Who was there to moan over you?
Wrack and ruin,
Hunger and hanger!
And who consoled you?
Your sons in a faint lay low
At every street's end
Like net-bound antelopes!
They were filled with the wrath of the Lord,
The rebuke of your God!

Give head, pray, therefore, to this, O wretched,
In a daze, but not from wine!
The Lord, your God, has this to say,
Your God who pleads for his folk:

GOD:
Behold, I take from your hand the vial of staggering;
The cup of my wrath you shall ne'er again have to drink.
I place it in the hand of your torturers,
In the hand of your harriers,
Who have said to your heart of hearts,
"Get down! Let us pass!"
And you laid your back like the ground
And a street for the passers.

PROPHET:
Awake! Awake! And don your might, O Zion!
Put on your robes of glory, Jerusalem, holy city!
For never again shall enter you
The heathen or pagan.
Shake off the dust; arise, O captive Jerusalem!
From your neck cast off the bonds, O captive damsel, Zion!
For the Lord has this to say,
"You were sold for no price;
"Not for coin are you ransomed!
"To Egypt went down my folk of old to sojourn there;
"Then Assyria crushed them unhindered!
"What have I now here?"
The writ of the Lord.
"Since my folk without payment were captured,
"Their masters are boasting!"
The writ of the Lord.
"The whole day through my name is profaned."
"So now shall my folk come to know my name,
"That I am he who says, 'Here am I!'"

The interjection of the phrase "The writ of the Lord" is a frequent device in the writings of Jeremiah which "Exile" employs on occasion to support some statement of unusual significance. In this case it occurs twice to promote the imperative necessity for God to clear his name of profanation by the heathen with slurring remarks as to the fate of his folk which implies impotence of their deity. The power of God must be vindicated by deliverance of his people from the woe which came on them by reason of their sins and not by reason of any impotence in their God. With these lines we are led into the chorale with which this third rhapsody concludes. This chorale is longer than

the precedents, and bears more definitely upon the real situation, concluding with an urgent appeal to the people to go forth from exile with heads held high and not as fugitives. This latter brings out the difference between this deliverance and that of an earlier era from Egypt.

CHORALE:
O'er the mountains how gracious the feet of the herald!
Proclaiming peace!
Heralding good!
Proclaiming salvation!
Announcing to Zion,
"Your God is King!"
O hark! Your sentinels lift their voice;
They shout together!
And eye greets eye as they meet,
When the Lord comes back to Zion.
Raise shouts of joy together,
Jerusalem's ruins,
For the Lord has consoled his folk,
Has redeemed Jerusalem.
The Lord has bared his holy arm
In the sight of all the nations;
And all the ends of the earth
Have seen our God's salvation.

Depart ye! Depart ye!
Go forth from there,
But touch nothing heathen!
Go forth therefrom! Make you clean,
Who bear the things of the Lord!
Yea, go forth, but not as in haste,
Nor in flight should you go,
For the Lord in the van is marching;
Your rearguard is Israel's God.

The fourth movement in the "Rhapsody of Zion's World Mission" which follows opens with the fourth "servant song." About this passage controversy has raged for centuries. Each interpreter is certain that he has the correct opinion as to its purport and as to the identity of the servant. We are as confident and doubtless as opinionated as the others. Our aim is, however, to weigh the passage not in isolation, nor even in connection with the other "servant songs" alone. We have sought to evaluate this passage as a part of the entire rhapsody. In this lies our chief confidence, especially since this approach has been justified by a resulting interpretation. Since the precedent "servant

songs" seem to identify the servant as Israel, the nation, it is natural to premise that the same identification should prevail in this later passage. At times the poet has faced Israel in its uninspired and stubborn elements, but in the "servant songs" he pictures the nation in terms of its pious and loyal elements. In this fourth "servant song" the ideal Israel is pictured as having wrought upon the heathen nations an impression which arouses them to give allegiance to the true God. The tragic experience of Israel which was a penalty for sin, touches the conscience of the heathen just because they realize that they have been guilty of the same sins and properly should in turn suffer the same penalties. Imaginatively the prophet describes them as repenting and joining in the chorus of the redeemed. This is but a part of the idealizing process which runs through all his work. This repentance of the heathen is no more hypothetical than is his picture of Zion restored. It is in fact the ultimate element in his hopeful dreams. Imaginative and poetic as it is, however, it is none the less prophetic in the sense that it conveys the hope and expectancy of a great spokesman for God.

It is well that we should keep this original purport of the passage distinct from that legitimate adaptation of the message to the redemptive experience of Jesus. In the work of earlier prophets many passages which embody sound and proper fundamentals, may be adapted to the life and work of the Savior. Many details in such adaptations cannot be carried over from the original; but the fundamental principles will be fit for transference to the work of the supreme Savior. We seek to avoid such confusion of the original purport with an adapted significance in our translation. It is our purpose to render here what the prophet had in mind to say to his exiled brethren. He was picturing an Israel which in the hands of God could become a savior of the world. The principles of saviorhood which he wrought out under the inspiration of his circumstances, have been found to be valid. They are the fundamentals of saviorhood in the experience of a nation and also in the experience of an individual. The details with which he colored his presentation may not fit with the details in the story of Jesus as a Savior. Nevertheless the adaptation which Christians have made of this passage are warranted, provided we recognize that we are making an adaptation which may differ in some of the details from that which we see in the later situation. Primarily the details vary because "Exile" was thinking of a

nation as the vehicle of salvation, while the New Testament portrays an individual as the Savior. We hope that with this explanation our rendering will not be any hindrance to those whose traditional and spiritual experience have ever associated this passage with Jesus and his redemptive work.

IV

God Through His Servant Israel Brings the Heathen To Allegiance and Zion Is Restored To Share In the Joy Everlasting 52:13–55:13

Israel's tragic fate convicts the heathen of sin and leads them to repent; Israel thus becomes God's true servant and earth's redeemer (Theme II) 52:13–53:12

GOD:
Behold, Israel, my servant, may rise,
Be exalted, and very eminent;
As many were once appalled at him,
For his person was marred inhumanly,
His form from human semblance,
So may many nations before him be silenced,
And kings shut their mouths in awe,
When they really see what had not been told them,
Understand what they had not heard.

THE HEATHEN:
Who could have believed what we heard?
Or to whom could the arm of the Lord have been shown?
He grew in his sight like a sprout,
Or a root from a waterless soil.
No shapeliness had he, nor beauty;
When we saw him the sight did not charm us.
Despised and bereft of men,
A person of pains, and known by disease,
We hid our faces from him;
We despised, we esteemed him not.
Assuredly he did bear our sickness,
And our pain, he bore that too;
While we believed him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted;
But pierced was he for our sins,
He was crushed for our misdeeds.
Fell our wholesome chastening on him,
And to us by his stripes comes health.
We all like sheep had strayed,

We had taken each one his own way,
And the Lord made to light upon him
The guilt of us all.
Abused was he, yea, afflicted;
But he opened not his mouth.
Like a sheep to the slaughter-pen led,
Or an ewe in her shearer's hand,
So he opened not his mouth.
Control and justice were stopped;
And who gave thought to his fate,
That his life was severed from the land,
He was smitten to death for our sins?
With the wicked his grave was dug,
With wrongdoers when he died,
Although he had done no violence,
Nor was there deceit in his mouth.
The Lord is pleased to heal him of sickness,
When he makes his life a sin-offering;
He shall see a posterity, continue his life,
And the will of the Lord at his hand be realized.
From the woe of his life shall come light;
He shall fully know, and shall triumph.

GOD:
My servant brings triumph to many;
Their sins he bears himself.
Hence I give him a share with the great,
And he shares the spoil with the strong,
Since he poured out his being in death,
And was numbered with sinners,
And himself bore the sins of many,
Interposing for sinners.[10]

After this statement of Israel's triumphant accomplishment of its mission the rhapsody moves on rapidly to its conclusion. The restoration of Zion is next described, and it is notable that this serves as a connective tissue between the rather sombre tone of the fourth "servant song" and the ecstatic joy of the finale.

God redeems his deserted wife, Zion, and brings her home
(Theme I) 54:1–10

PROPHET:
Exult, barren one, and childless!
Raise a paean of joy and shout, O birthless!

[10] Space forbids the recording of the textual apparatus in support of this translation.

For more sons has she, the deserted,
Than she in wedlock, declares the Lord.
Extend the site of your tent!
Spread wide the flies of your tent without let!
Make your tent-cords longer;
And your tent-pegs stronger!
Yea, to right and to left push out
That your stock may possess the nations,
And people the desolate towns.
Fear not, for you shall not be shamed;
Nor feel diffident; you bear no disgrace.
Yea, the shame of your youth you'll forget;
You'll remember no more the reproach of your widowhood.
Yea, your husband is your Maker,
The Lord of hosts is his name.
Your Redeemer is Israel's Holiness,
The God of all earth he is called.
Like a wife outcast, and downcast in spirit, the Lord calls you;
Like a wife in youth when divorced, the Lord declares.

God:
"I forsook you a little moment;
"But reclaim you with infinite kindness.
"In a flood of wrath I hid my face for a moment;
"But console you with love eternal,"
The Lord, your Redeemer, declares.
"Like the waters of Noah is this to me!
"Since I vowed the waters of Noah should not flood the earth again;
"Even so I vow not to vent on you rebuke or wrath.
"Though the mountains should pass, and the hills be shaken,
"Yet from you passes not my love, and the pact of my peace is not shaken.
"The Lord, your Consoler, speaks,
"O wretched one, storm-tossed, inconsolable!
"Behold, even I am laying your stones in stibium,
"Your foundations with sapphires!
"Your turrets I set with rubies;
"Your gates with gleaming stones;
"And all your ramparts with lovely gems!
"Yea, all your sons shall be taught by the Lord;
"Your sons shall have peace profound;
"You shall stand in triumph!
"Far from oppression, you need not fear,
"And from terror which shall not approach you!
"Lo, if any rouse strife, 'tis not from me;
"Who quarrels with you shall fall beside you.

"Behold, 'tis I who create a smith
"Who blows up a fire of coals,
"Producing a weapon for his use;
" 'Tis I who create the destroyer to ravage.
"No weapon shaped against you shall avail;
"Every tongue raised against you at law you shall quell;
"Such is their portion who serve the Lord,
"Their triumph through me."
The writ of the Lord.

Finale
A Paean of Joy over Zion Redeemed 55:1–12

GOD:
Hither, you thirsty! Come to the water!
Even you who have no money, come!
Buy and eat without any payment;
Yea, wine and milk without any charge.
Oh, why pay out money for what is not bread,
And your toil for what sates not?
Give good heed to me, and eat what is good;
Let your soul find delight in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come unto me;
Give heed, and your soul shall thrive.
I will make with you a pact eternal,
A David's lasting blessedness.
Behold, I made him a witness to peoples,
A leader and sovereign of nations.
Behold, you shall call a folk unknown,
And a folk shall greet you who knew you not,
For the sake of the Lord, your God,
Israel's Holiness, gracing you.

PROPHET:
Oh, come to the Lord discoverable;
Invoke him while he is near.
Let the wicked quit his course;
And the evil man his thoughts.
Let him turn to the Lord for consoling,
To our God who freely forgives.

GOD:
For my thoughts are not as yours,
Nor my ways as your ways.
The writ of the Lord.
Yea, as heaven is high above earth,
So are my ways higher than your ways,

And my thoughts than your thoughts.
Yea, even as rain comes down
And snow from the heavens,
To return not thither;
But to water the earth,
Make it yield and bud;
To give seed to the sower,
And bread to the eater;
Even so shall be my word
Which issues from my mouth.
It shall not return to me void;
But shall work out that which I will,
And accomplish the end of its mission.

Chorale 55:13

Yea, with joy shall you leave;
Be led forth in peace!
The mountains and hills before you raise paeans of joy,
And the trees of the field clap their hands.
In place of thorns shall fir-trees rise;
And myrtles grow where nettles did.
This redounds to the fame of the Lord,
As a token eternal, imperishable.

With this chorale concludes the rhapsody, one of the most brilliant and inspiring compositions from the pen of mankind. The work of "Exile" could not but have been a prime element in the impulse which led to the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. His dream of a restored nation was realized, while his larger hope of the redemption of the whole earth and the inclusion of all mankind in the loyal devotion of man to the true God sped Judaism along the way of its missionary activities which extended far and wide in the world. While the accomplishment of his great dream of hope has not yet been fully realized, yet his work is still a treasure in the souls of those who are loyal to the true God and we make bold to say that it will at length find accomplishment. With him was born the great commission. Through Jesus the world was inspired with an even greater impulse toward this grand dream of a world brought to the feet of God. Not the least in the great line of predecessors of him whom great multitudes of every nation and tongue today call Lord, "Exile" deserves well the name of forerunner.

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON
NEW ENGLAND POET-PHILOSOPHER

THOMAS WEARING

ALL writers on Edwin Arlington Robinson agree that he is a typical New England product. The Van Dorens describe him as "another Hawthorne, more learned and more ironical," and add that his characters bear the same New England stamp. They "have so much of the Yankee in them that they cannot cry out with the loud voices of most tragic heroes. They are most eloquent in their silences." Clement Wood remarks that both Head Tide and Gardiner, Maine, where the poet had his birth and boyhood, were "at that time bleak with an air of seventeenth century Puritanism." Louis Untermeyer refers to Robinson's transcendentalism and his quest through reason for truth in the authentic "Yankee tradition." Van Wyck Brooks points out that Robinson, particularly in his earlier poetry, was "in the line of Emerson, who liked 'dry light and hard clouds, hard expressions and hard manners.'" Brooks alludes to Robinson's style as "hard" and "clear" and "honest." With his usual light touch, William Lyons Phelps, concluding a sketch of Robinson, places the poet by his description in a frame of reference indubitably New England. To Phelps the poetry of Robinson "is valuable for its moral stimulus; for its unadorned honesty and sincerity; for its clear rather than its warm singing. He is an excellent draughtsman; everything that he has done has beauty of line; anything pretentious is to him abhorrent. He is more map-maker than painter. He has drawn many an intricate and accurate chart of the deeps and shallows of the human soul." To make use of a striking sentence suggested to Van Wyck Brooks by John P. Marquand's famous novel of New England, it may be declared that in the poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson, "the clock of Wickford Point went on ticking."

Mr. Hermann Hagedorn, in his very readable biography of the Maine poet, describes vividly the background of life and thought from which emerged the outlook and general attitude expressed in Robinson's poetry. His forbears were "in the main, men who had property to distribute when they died, and women who bore large families and brought them up both to obey and to command, to keep the conscience keen, and to whet their minds on 'doctrine' until the best had a razor-edge. Most of them were over-serious, being mindful of devils, large and

small, in ambush for the unwary; they felt unduly responsible for their neighbors' salvation and were inclined to raise gossip to the dignity of a priestly office; they were haunted by a sense of incomprehensible and inescapable destiny; and the wisest at times suffered from spiritual indigestion. They were not without humor, though it was like their own chipmunks, elusive and abrupt; they were neighborly—now and again to the point of saintliness—giving their time, their energy, their thoughtful care as a matter of course to those in need; but they mistrusted any form of enthusiasm, and repressed illicit passions as their sea-faring men out of Salem or Wiscasset repressed mutiny. They were inclined to believe, indeed, that all emotion was of the devil, and the expression of it, self-indulgence and a sin; and chose, as a rule, to keep the part of them that suffered and aspired, imprisoned behind straight lips and unrevealing eyes. They were often needlessly torn between the spirit and the flesh; they were plagued by the Protestant philosophy of success, the sense that they must justify their existence in terms which the common man would understand. But wherever they went, they laid firm foundations; and they appeared more unreal than they were."

A poem of Robinson's under the title "New England," describes unerringly his early environment.

"Here where the wind is always north-north-east
And children learn to walk on frozen toes,
Wonder begets an envy of all those
Who boil elsewhere with such lyric yeast
Of love that you will hear them at a feast
Where demons would appeal for some repose,
Still clamoring where the chalice overflows
And crying wildest who have drunk the least.
Passion is here a soilure of the wits,
We're told, and Love a cross for them to bear;
Joy shivers in the corner where she knits
And Conscience always has the rocking chair,
Cheerful as when she tortured into fits
The first cat that was ever killed by Care."

Robinson's family when he was still very young, moved from Head Tide to the nearby town of Gardiner. Later the poet immortalized this place under the name of Tilbury Town in some of his first poems.

"In Tilbury Town we looked beyond
Horizons for the man Flammonde." (Flammonde)

"In Tilbury Town did old King Cole
A wise old age anticipate." (Old King Cole)

"Where are you going, to-night, to-night,—
Where are you going, John Evereldown? (John Evereldown)
There's never a sign of a star in sight,
Nor a lamp that's nearer than Tilbury Town."

In the first of the longer poems produced by Robinson, Tilbury Town is the home of Captain Craig, the chief character who gives his name to the poem. It is to be noted that in this case the poet "had a living model, one Alfred H. Louis," from whose lineaments he fashioned this retired sea-faring man who was somewhat of a humorist after the style of the ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates. The last section of this long poem is worth citing here.

"The ways have scattered for us, and all things
Have changed; and we have wisdom, I doubt not,
More fit for the world's work than we had then;
But neither parted roads nor cent per cent
May starve quite out the child that lives in us—
The Child that is the Man, the Mystery,
The Phoenix of the World. So, now and then,
That evening of the day the Captain died
Returns to us; and there comes always with it
The storm, the warm restraint, the fellowship,
The friendship and the firelight, and the fiddle.
So, too, there comes a day that followed it—
A windy, dreary day with a cold white shine,
Which only gummed the tumbled frozen ruts
That made us ache. The road was hard and long,
But we had what we knew to comfort us,
And we had the large humor of the thing
To make it advantageous; for men stopped
And eyed us on that road from time to time,
And on that road the children followed us;
And all along that road the Tilbury Band
Blared indiscreetly the Dead March of Saul."

Robinson, in 1891, entered Harvard University. After two years, because of his father's illness, he was compelled to return to Gardiner. Here he studied privately and wrote verse, throwing most of it away. In 1896 with utter faith in his own product he had privately printed a slender sheaf of poetry "The Torrent and the Night Before," on the flyleaf of which appeared the notice: "This book is dedicated to any

man, woman or critic who will cut the edges of it. I have done the top." The poet's outlook on life at this period may be discerned in a letter of his in a reply to a review in The Bookman, February, 1907. The reviewer, referring to Robinson, had written, "The world is not beautiful to him, but a prisonhouse." Taking strong objection to this interpretation the poet replied: "The world is not a 'prisonhouse' but a kind of spiritual kindergarten where millions of bewildered infants are trying to spell 'God' with the wrong blocks." Robinson's poem "Cassandra" puts the problem in a frame of reference familiar enough to students of American life in the twentieth century.

"I heard one who said: 'Verily,
What word have I for children here?
Your Dollar is your only Word,
The wrath of it your only fear.

You build it altars tall enough
To make you see, but you are blind;
You cannot leave it long enough
To look before you or behind.

When Reason beckons you to pause,
You laugh and say that you know best;
But what it is you know, you keep
As dark as ingots in a chest.

You laugh and answer, 'We are young;
Oh, leave us now, and let us grow;'
Not asking how much more of this
Will Time endure or Fate bestow.

Because a few complacent years
Have made your peril of your pride,
Think you that you are to go on
Forever pampered and untried?

What lost eclipse of history,
What bivouac of the marching stars,
Has given the sign for you to see
Millenniums and last great wars?

What unrecorded overthrow
Of all the world has ever known,
Or ever been, has made itself
So plain to you, and you alone?

Your Dollar, Dove and Eagle make
A Trinity that even you
Rate higher than you rate yourselves;
It pays, it flatters, and it's new.

* * * *

Think you to tread forever down
The merciless old verities?
And are you never to have eyes
To see the world for what it is?

Are you to pay for what you have
With all you are?'—No other word
We caught, but with the laughing crowd
Moved on. None heeded, and few heard."

Soon after publishing forty-four poems in 1897 under the title, "Children of the Night," Robinson left Maine for New York determined to devote his entire time to poetry. For a time he lived in Yonkers, to use his own words, "on an ignominious little street, atilt like a house roof all of cobbles, opposite a factory. It was the meanest little house in the mean street." Later he is found in what he describes as "a sordid stall on the fifth floor of a dreary house" on West Twenty-third Street, in New York City. His family fortune had taken wings and he did odd jobs, among them, one as inspector on the subway which was being built at that time. In 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt published in The Outlook a colorful review of Robinson's poetry. This attracted a wider circle of readers. Mr. Roosevelt also offered him a consulship in Mexico but the poet preferred to remain in New York and accepted an office in the Customs House. This he held for some years, but he kept on writing verse and, later, determined to devote all of his time to it.

When the McDowell Colony in Peterboro, New Hampshire, was begun, Robinson was greatly interested and in 1911 spent his first summer in the delightful environment created by nature and man amongst the mountains, woods and lakes. Some say his summers in the Colony kept Robinson quickened in his creative activity. Three times his poetry won the Pulitzer prize, 1922, his Collected Poems, a ponderous tome of 1007 pages, and again in 1922 for "The Man Who Died Twice," the problem of one Fernando Nash, who "in spite of apparent frustration carries the nameless and authentic seal of power and ordained accomplishment, his service to God." Then in 1927 Robinson got the prize

for "Tristram," his treatment of ancient Arthurian legendary material, although he himself considered the other two Arthurian poems, "Merlin" and "Lancelot," superior, with "Merlin" the best of the three.

Those who knew Robinson well have put it on record that the poet's two favorite books were Shakespeare and the Bible. Dickens, too, was toward the top of his list of preferred fiction. He considered Thomas Hardy's "Dynasts" as the "greatest long poem of the nineteenth century." For recreation he read every kind of detective story with "particular fondness" for Conan Doyle's "Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," the books by E. P. Oppenheim and even for the Bulldog Drummond thrillers. Gilbert and Sullivan's light operas were all his life a recreational delight, and his poems show a wide and precise knowledge of the great creators in the realm of music such as Wagner, Bach and Grieg. His life was not lived in the glare of publicity. He was a man of quiet tastes. Once he said he would not read his poetry or that of any other man in public for a million dollars. He never even in private talked about his own or other people's poetic productions. He was a tall, slender man, with thinning hair above a high, scholarly brow. Dark contemplative eyes peered through heavy spectacles. He always wore a slight mustache which scarcely served to conceal thin lips that seemed capable of concealing every kind of secret from verbal expression but which seemed also on the verge of a smile whenever he did engage in conversation. Van Wyck Brooks has some sentences about Robinson that put the poet clearly before his readers. Robinson, Brooks writes, "was like the stranger in his 'Tasker Norcross' who confessed that 'he had never yet been warm'. Taciturn, shy as an owl, diffident, lonely, he could only establish relations with others by drinking; yet everyone confided in him, for he was the most sympathetic of men, as winning as he was aloof, and completely unworldly. Helpless in practical matters, naturally forlorn, he had the will to write but not to live, and he suffered himself to be rescued again and again and reverted again and again to a life in the shadow. Abjuring the 'octopus of superficial self-respect' he haunted mean streets and sordid houses, for the only success that he recognized was failure in the eyes of men, and he saw even this as distorted and thwarted. . . . He sought, by a natural impulse, the despised and rejected, the lost and maladjusted and the lonely, because in his time and place, he was a poet."

The significance of Edwin Arlington Robinson as a poet (one might perhaps write, "the poet") of twentieth century America can be ap-

preciated only against the amazing literary phenomenon which marked the years immediately preceding what is now styled "World War I." That period produced what many have put down as a real renaissance. The American burgeoning of poetic genius was first observed and acclaimed by writers and critics in England. If a play on words may be permitted it may be stated that it took a New England Frost to arouse this interest. After more than a decade of farming, and writing, unnoticed, in New Hampshire, Robert Lee, with the frigid surname, went across the Atlantic, became acquainted with Rupert Brooks, Lascelles Abercrombie, Walter de la Mare, Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, John Drinkwater, and others in that "nest of singing birds," and, with their appreciative encouragement, ventured to seek a publisher with the manuscript of "A Boy's Will." (1913) The next year Frost rented a Gloucestershire farm, and had published his "North of Boston." Louis Untermeyer praises this as "one of the most intensely American books ever printed," noting at the same time that it "was published in England." What a striking illustration in modern experience of that remarkable saying, centuries gone, of the Galilaean, "a prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house!" (Mark 6:4) In this same year of 1914, which witnessed the outbreak of a war that destroyed so much of the earth's loveliness, was brought before the eyes of an astonished American public the first anthology of "Imagist" poetry, James Oppenheim's "Songs for the New Age," Amy Lowell's "Sword Blades and Poppy Seed," Nicholas (Vachel) Lindsay's "The Congo and other Poems." This efflorescence of intoxicating and bewildering poesy continued in 1915 in Edgar Lee Master's "Spoon River Anthology," and John Gould Fletcher's "Irradiations." In 1916 Carl (August) Sandburg made a bid for the laureateship of industrial America by publishing his "Chicago Poems." By 1917 three sprightly anthologies of "Free Verse" had stirred into vituperation many who claimed to see in what these new writers called "Poetry" the destruction of literary conventions enshrined endearingly for centuries in the annals of English and American poetry. E. P. Herbert, the English humorist, has a priceless essay on this subject of the "New Poetry." The renaissance, with its mingled emotional reactions, harked back, Untermeyer asserts, to Walt Whitman, as its "spiritual godfather," William Vaughan Moody and Edwin Markham as its immediate forerunners.

The relation of Robinson to this renascence of American poetry is brought out by Louis Untermeyer in the preface of his valuable volume, "Modern American Poetry," a Critical Anthology (Fourth Revised Edition). For years this poet from Maine had been "employing the sharp epithet, the direct and clarifying utterances" which became so prominent in the technique of the new poetry. "He stressed the psychological element with unerring artistry and sureness of touch. His sympathetic studies of men whose lives were, from a worldly standpoint, failures, were a sharp reaction to the current high valuation on financial achievements, ruthless efficiency and success at any cost. Ahead of his period, he had to wait until 1916, when a public prepared for him by the awakened interest in native poetry discovered 'The Man Against the Sky' (1916) and the richness of Robinson at the same time." Van Wyck Brooks, in his "New England Summer (1865–1915)" gives a still more important place to Robinson's relation to the revival of poetry in America. He writes in this appreciative vein: "In later years, after the war, when poets talked of a 'renaissance' Robinson was called its prime precursor. At a time when American poetry had reached its lowest ebb, he, in his obscurity, was real and vital; and the 'irony and pity' with which he regarded his victims of fate struck the note of the novelist as well as the poets. His probing, questioning, doubting mind was the mind of the new generation; and his portraits, even his sonnets, were novels in little. His longer psychological poems continued the line of Howells and James; and his technical development foreshadowed the poets that were coming. He had cast off the influence of Aldrich, which dominated the magazine verse of the moment, although, as if to train his hand, he had written his villanelles and ballades. He had reacted against this facile jingling. He had sought for the spoken phrase, for the neat and plain; and, if his style was too prosaic, if it was too bare and cold, it was hard, it was clear and it was honest. Here again he abhorred the fatuous and the stereotyped. In short, in a poetical world of baker's bread and confectionery, Robinson brought forth real bread again."

The productive period, whose beginning was anticipated by the work of Edwin Arlington Robinson and upon whose highest levels the footprints of this shy pilgrim will forever be found, is described by Van Wyck Brooks in his own inimitable fashion. "Henceforth, at least for twenty years, the chief pursuit of these Yankee authors, and of most of the American authors concerned with New England,—was the game

of pulling the skeletons out of the cupboards. There were plenty of skeletons in them to pull, for no one had ever done justice to the fund of evil that lurked in the soul of the region. The Yankee mind was beginning to pay for its somewhat cocky optimism, and even for Emerson's noble ignoring of pain. It had had perhaps too easy a victory over a virgin world of nature, where every prospect pleased and man was good; and its energy reverted now to the earlier, Calvinistic view that narrowed and all but closed the eye of the needle. New England was searching its conscience, an unlovely task, but one that it had to perform. It was useless to dwell any longer, in the happy, older fashion, on the bluejays that bickered in the hedgerows, on the goldenrod with its splendid plumes, the gentians and the morning-glories and the purple asters nodding at the road-sides. These flowers that burgeoned in the Yankee soil pervading the mind with zest and vigour, in days when all the roads, with their fragrant borders, were roads of generosity, hope and purpose. Whither did the roads lead now? This ominous question shadowed the flowers and muted the songs of the birds to such an extent that poets, concerned with this question, the more they were concerned to answer it, turned their backs the more on the flowers and the birds. For the ground of the literary mind was gradually shifting, and the writers of the future were destined for a season to reverse and even deny the writers of the past. Whither did the roads lead? Some led where they had always led, although fewer and fewer minds were disposed to see it. The day was approaching for Irving Babbitt to have his say, for Edwin Arlington Robinson, for Santayana, for Eugene O'Neill and T. S. Eliot, for Edna St. Vincent Millay, and E. E. Cummings. It was true that in these writers,—in Robert Frost especially,—New England was to have another springtime. But, first, it had to dree its weird. It had to pass through the shadow. Only then was it ripe for these new revelations."

The newly quickened interest in poetry that brought so many American names into the limelight may have had Robinson as its "prime precursor," but this poet cannot be classed with the "Imagists" with any comfort for him or for them. He was, perhaps, the foremost prophet of a new state of mind and of new ideas which were taken up enthusiastically by the young poets of "Free Verse" school but his poetry was in the classic style and in the New England tradition. William Lyon Phelps, in his second series of "As I Like It," refers to a recently published volume of verse (1924) called "The Ring of Love," by Brookes

More, a brother of Paul Elmer More, and calls it "a challenge to all the experimenters of the twentieth century, from the best to Gertrude Stein." Phelps continues in an unusual mood of excoriation. "Is this the first bugle call against the excesses of contemporary free verse? If so, its publication is significant. But I do not worry about our ridiculous American poetasters, however mightily they advertise themselves, and however strong the gusts of puffery behind their sails; 'as my Lord Rochester said, though somewhat profanely, NOT BEING OF GOD, THEY CANNOT STAND.' The best living poets are as unlike our free versifiers as could be well imagined; Kipling, De la Mare, Hodgson, Masefield, Noyes, Yeats, Housman, seem quite unaffected by the 'new' poetry; and in America our leaders, Robinson, Frost, Lindsay, Anna Branch, Sara Teasdale, somehow or other manage to attract attention without indulging in discords. They are self-starters; the free versifiers are usually started by some crank, and attract notice only by leaving their mufflers open."

It will be noticed that Phelps places Robinson first in the list of his American poets of the twentieth century revival and completely absolves him of any meretricious mingling with imagist transgressors. In the same general vein Morton Dauen Zabie writes for "The Nation," of August 28, 1937, a review of a recently published "Collected Poems of Robinson." Mr. Zabie under the title, "Robinson, the Ironic Discipline," holds that the poet "kept scrupulously aloof from literary politics and their corrupting demands." The man from Maine was "probably the only member of his American generation who knew what it meant for a poet to confront as bewildering a world as the one that opened its opportunities at the end of the nineteenth century. Stephen Crane's talent was slight and inhibited by irony; Moody's was confused and inflated by traditional influences; Stickney's alone had a subtle sensibility to support its intelligence, and it alone had what Robinson never fully enjoyed—a background of rich aesthetic sympathies and a stimulating contact with French poets—but early death cut short its fulfilment. These men were all temperamental empiricists. Robinson was the only one among them who knew how to sustain that realism by analysis, skepticism, and the long-tested endurance of intellectual honesty and passion." At the conclusion of this searching examination of Robinson's contribution to American poetry Mr. Zabie points out again that the New England poet "brought the intellect back to poetry—through a realism at once psychological and verbal:—he treated Whit-

man's prophetism of success with a native strain of pragmatic skepticism; he turned American imaginative literature away from mere naturalistic documentation to the study of motive and idea, harking back to Meredith and James and Conrad for this in dramatic invention." Robert Browning might very well have been included in this list. "These matters," adds Mr. Zabie, "deserve attention as much as the ironic humor of his characters, the rich effects of lyric beauty of which he was capable, and the isolated superiority of his role in modern poetry. It is a superiority both honorable and enviable, but it should not be exaggerated to the extent of dividing him too roughly either from the events amid which he lived or from the aesthetic activities and reforms in which he played a far more conspicuous part than is commonly supposed."

The Andover-Newton professor, Amos N. Wilder, in his "Spiritual Aspects of the New Poetry," alludes more than once to a conviction that Robinson "could not go beyond an heroic stoicism." Where T. S. Eliot, "of New England inheritance and temperament, found a satisfying religious mode for life and literature" amongst the Anglo-Catholics, Robinson "a poet of the Puritan tradition, caught profoundly in the stresses of contemporary experience," . . . "remained in a detached relation in his tradition, in a courageous stoicism first cousin to a dour and granite Calvinism." Estelle Kaplan, in her "Philosophy in the Poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson," (Columbia Studies in American Culture, 1940) indicates Robinson as more or less following Josiah "Royce's Philosophy of Loyalty," in which loyalty really transcends duty by becoming an object of devotion, leaving a place for love in its highest form. This is the "Grail" in Robinson's treatment of the Arthurian material he so magnificently wrought upon in "Merlin" (1917) and "Lancelot" (1920). On the flyleaf of a first edition of "The Glory of the Nightingales," written immediately after reading this moving narrative, is a quotation from "Princes of the Modern Pulpit in England," by E. H. Jeffs. The American writer had listened to a sermon by W. E. Orchard and this is his comment. "The central point of the sermon, one might say, was neither Catholic nor Evangelical, but simply Christian. It was the emphatic declaration that complete forgiveness of our enemies is only possible when we take God's view of things, and we see in the person who does the wrong, and not the person who is wronged, the one most deeply to be pitied. The one sinned against has suffered some temporal wrong; the other is in dan-

ger of eternal injury. We must forgive him to save him. Forgiveness, not revenge, will draw him to penitence and salvation." Robinson may not have used such theological terms as are found in this statement, yet, curiously enough, the quotation has to do with the central theme of "The Glory of the Nightingales," where Malory set out to take revenge on Nightingale who had robbed him of the woman both loved and who had reached such singular success. No authentic stoic could have written this poem. Nor could a modern follower of Marcus Aurelius have penned that perfect sonnet "Calvary," which appeared in Robinson's early work prior to the opening of the present century.

"Friendliness and faint, with martyred steps and slow,
Faint for the flesh, but for the spirit free,
Stung by the mob that came to see the show,
The Master toiled along to Calvary;
We gibed him, as he went, with houndish glee,
Till his dimmed eyes for us did overflow;
We cursed his vengeless hands thrice wretchedly,—
And this was nineteen hundred years ago.

* * * *

"But after nineteen hundred years the shame
Still clings, and we have not made good the loss
That outraged faith has entered in his name.
Ah, when shall come love's courage to be strong!
Tell me, O Lord—tell me, O Lord, how long
Are we to keep Christ writhing on the cross!"

The philosopical outlook this New England poet hints at in "Captain Craig" persisted throughout the years of failure and success until the very early hours of that March morning in 1935 when, concerned with his poetical work until the last, he turned away from a world of men and things to make a last pilgrimage.

"Alone; and in the darkness came the Light." Let the reflection of the narrator in "Captain Craig" bring the context in which the life and thought of this great American poet-philosopher can be best appreciated.

"Nor are the shapes of obsolescent creeds
Much longer to flit near enough to make
Men glad for living in a world like this;
For wisdom, courage, knowledge, and the faith
Which has the soul and is the soul of reason—
These are the world's achievers. And the child—

The child that is the saviour of all ages,
The prophet and the poet, the crownbearer,
Must yet with Love's unhonored fortitude,
Survive to cherish and attain for us
The candor and the generosity,
By leave of which we smile if we bring back
The first revealing flash that wakened us
When wisdom like a shaft of dungeon-light
Came searching down to find us." [1]

[1] The following books have been consulted, and their contents quoted, in the preparation of this article. To the publishers of these grateful acknowledgment is hereby given.

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KIERKEGAARD'S SIGNIFICANCE AS A "CORRECTIVE"

George E. Levy [1]

Sören Kierkegaard (1813–1855), Danish philosopher, theologian, aesthetic critic, psychologist, and litterateur, held that his peculiar mission was to exert a corrective influence on his own age. The only title he appropriated to himself was "the Corrective." It was not a proud title nor was the mission it designated an easy one. Inasmuch as a corrective will naturally insist on a "vigorously one-sided" aspect of the truth, it will itself one day stand in need of correction and must not be regarded as a norm. Tomorrow it may be necessary to correct Kierkegaard but today his significane for Christian thought consists largely, if not entirely, in his ability to act as a corrective of easy-going, superficial forms of thought and so-called Christian practices.

Marked by nature as one apart from the common concourse of men and equipped with the necessary weapon in his keen and passionate dialectic, Kierkegaard proceeded to his task with unrelenting zeal and courage. The characteristics of the day in which he lived cried out for a corrective. In a period caught in a maze of Hegelian logical and metaphysical subtleties that swallowed up all qualitative distinctions, he drew a clear line between the transcendent and the immanent, the divine and the human, the heavenly and the earthly, between faith and philosophy. Without any apologies he held fast to Christianity in the form of an unqualified supernaturalism. He established in heaven the things of heaven and set on earth the things which are earthly, and declared that these forever have been and forever shall be twain. Their relation must always be *either/or,* never so confused that it becomes *both/and.*

This article does not attempt to give a detailed analysis of contemporary Christian thought in an effort to show how Kierkegaard serves as its corrective. Rather, its purpose is to hold up certain aspects of his thought as a mirror that we may see wherein we need correction; not to apply his corrective but to show that he has one for us if we desire it. To contemporary Christian thought more deeply infected with the genius of the Rennaisance and modern scientific research than it is

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imbued with the spirit of the Reformation, this man has many provocative things to say about God, the individual, and the Christian faith.

I

Kierkegaard accepted the existence of God as being beyond question and had nothing but scorn for the labored efforts of philosophers and theologians who attempt to prove his existence. Their efforts he could compare to nothing more fitting than to those of subjects who, in a land where a king is on the throne, "set themselves down to investigate whether it is the proper thing to have a king. . . . Thus people behave toward God; they forget that God exists and deliberate whether it is the most proper and acceptable thing to have a God." [2]

Not only is the existence of God accepted beyond all doubt, there "is an infinite, yawning difference between God and man"—God is God and man is man. They are set over against each other with the stress on their opposition rather than on their relation. Kierkegaard shrank with horror from any obliteration of the dividing line. This distinction is the basis of all his other closely drawn antitheses. His thought is completely theocentric, and the approach to the problem of divine-human relations is always from the side of the divine. The Barthians speak of "an infinite, qualitative difference between God and man." In so doing, they are, as they acknowledge, merely repeating Kierkegaard's original emphasis.

Kierkegaard did not regard this "infinite, yawning difference" purely as a matter of metaphysics. It has a very practical bearing on man's salvation and on his relationship to God. "To need God is man's highest perfection," so runs his ever-recurring theme. Man is not responsible for the creation or awakening of this sense of need, it is God's way of bringing man to himself. Kierkegaard accepted Augustine's well-known insight, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and we are restless until we rest in Thee," and made it basic in his description of the divine-human relationship. In the world without there are natural forces of opposition that make man brace himself in struggle and help to develop his finest powers; but the case is entirely different when he turns to the struggle within. Then he is cast down before the omnipotence of God. With the consummate skill of a master psychologist, Kierkegaard again and again describes the feeling of guilt that pos-

[2] Lowrie, Walter—*Kierkegaard,* p. 311, Oxford Press. By permission.

sesses man in the presence of God—"before God," as he always expressed it—and the despair that leads him on through "fear and trembling" [3] to an experience of the offered grace wherein he finds blessedness and such peace and joy as he can know "here" in a finite sphere of existence. In this hour of tremendous decision which is "the moment" above all moments in his earthly existence man receives what he had not previously possessed, God and the truth. This need of God is common to all men alike, and the entirely revolutionary character of the decision in which alone it is satisfied, makes it impossible for man to regard God lightly. He is more than "man writ large;" if not so, he would be powerless to aid man in his despair and completely unworthy of worship.

An essential element in this decision is the appropriation of what he called "The Gospel of Suffering." Kierkegaard did not mean suffering in a purely physical sense, or for its own sake like so much fire to consume its own smoke, but suffering in a spiritual sense and as a point through which needy man passes to what is beyond—the suffering of despair and uncertainty before he reaches the assurance of God and the truth. Man's greatest joy and comfort are, so he boldly asserts, that the pathway to God is always through suffering. Whether it is always so or not, the New Testament and the personal records of the saints attest the worth of the insight, hopelessly paradoxical as it may appear.

Kierkegaard recognized the inescapable element of paradox in his view of God and never attempted to resolve it by a process of rationalization. Unhesitatingly he accepted the Schoolman's principle of *credo quia absurdum*. *Credo* here is not the work of reason but of faith which accepts in religion what appears to outrage reason. The paradoxes of the Christian view of God and the supreme paradox, the God-man, can be accepted only by faith. Faith as such mocks all canons of probability and outdoes reason—indeed, it may even be necessary to strangle the intellect in order to exercise faith. Faith is often, if not always, a leap in the dark, at its best a "fighting certainty." To many this will sound like sheer credulity on the part of the great Dane. Notwithstanding all that may be said in defence of reason as an adjunct to faith, and there is much to be said, there is faith of the kind which outreaches reason and is held to be equally valid as a means of appre-

[3] Both these phrases are also the titles of works published by Kierkegaard.

hending divine truth. In defence of this view schools of thought so far apart today as the Neo-Thomist and the Lundensian clasp hands across the centuries with Schoolmen and the Reformers.

Some of Kierkegaard's critics claim that he did not adequately grasp certain elements, such as love, in God's relationship to man. Yet, despite his stern earnestness and darker moods of guilt and despair, he never failed to emphasize the divine love. Love, he says, is the sole content of eternity; it undergirds and interprets the supreme paradox, the God-man; it alone explains why Christ could have fellowship with man and at last die on the Cross. In his treatment of the theme Kierkegaard preserved the majesty and love of God in such form that neither obscured the other and the emphasis on both gave to his writings a distinctly evangelical note. It is possible that his critics may have some things to learn from him about the true nature of divine love.

Whether his critics be right or not, it is indisputably true that a conception of God shorn of all mystery, with love reduced to the terms of psychological jargon, and faith replaced by a coldly rational process, is at the same time a conception robbed of power. The remark of the French savant who declared that "Le Dieu défini est le Dieu fini" is more than a witticism. Kierkegaard points man to a God who is far from "finished," to one quite able to help him in his struggle to overcome the evil and the malaise of the finite order round about him.

II

Throughout all his works Kierkegaard referred constantly to "the individual" [4] in an effort to stress the sovereign rights of the individual over against the tyranny of the multitude, or "crowd." The evil of all evils was for him the nameless, will-less crowd—that impersonal entity which provides a hiding place for cowards and weaklings. He poured out the vials of his wrath on the literary counterpart of the crowd, the popular press, which aids and abets the former. Brandes, the Danish literary critic who first introduced him to the world outside Denmark, termed this emphasis on the individual "the pearl of great price which Kierkegaard offered to his time."

It is a deplorable misunderstanding of Kierkegaard to make his emphasis on the individual synonymous with individualism as we un-

[4] The references to the individual and the quotation in this section are mostly from "two notes" on the *"Individual"* published along with *"The Point of View,"* Oxford Press.

derstand it. He had no patience with the idiosyncrasies of separate individuals and less desire to break up society into so many private selves each striving to realize his own petty ambitions. The "individual" of whom he writes is a spiritual personality, a citizen of eternity, one who stands "face to face before God." Although man stands at the opposite pole from God, he never realizes his individuality apart from God. Kierkegaard's individualism differs from all others in that it is strictly religious. "Religiously speaking," he wrote, "there is no such thing as a public, but only individuals." [5] Again he says, " 'The individual' is the category of the spirit, of spiritual awakening." Such language sounds strange today to ears accustomed to hearing society referred to as the only reality with God and the individual as mere abstraction.

The crowd gives a false sense of security to those who compose it. Standing alone, a man knows that he is responsible for his own deeds. But when he merges in the crowd, he experiences a false sense of security in that he believes the mass, not himself is now responsible. Hence under cover of the crowd he shows his inherent cowardice and weakness; he loses the standing he had as an individual before God and as responsible to him and now contributes his share to the accumulated cowardliness and beastliness of the mass. No one standing apart from the crowd would dare spit in the face of Jesus, he says, yet under its protection men actually did spit in his face. The "crowd" and a "congregation of worshippers" are different in that the former "stands for number, millionaires, high dignitaries, etc.,—and as soon as the numerical enters it is 'crowd,' 'the crowd,' " whereas the latter does not conflict with the individual.[6] Kierkegaard had the bitterest scorn for "battalion-Christians" whose interest is in numbers rather than in quality of spiritual life. Well that he lived before the modern ecclesiastical editions of the Book of Numbers became the vogue. His insight as a psychologist was scarcely ever more penetrating—or, more prophetic—than when he diagnoses the winning of the crowd: "It is no great trick," he says, "to win the crowd. All that is needed is some talent, a certain dose of falsehood, and a little acquaintance with human passions."

The individuality of which Kierkegaard wrote is a spiritual aristocracy open to all men. No one is excluded other than those who

[5] Ibid., pp. 153, 154.
[6] Ibid., pp. 114, 153.

exclude themselves by joining the crowd. "The individual—not in the sense of the specially distinguished or the specially gifted individual, but the individual in the sense in which every man, absolutely every man, can and should be—should take pride in being, and will verily also discover his blessedness in being" is Kierkegaard's individual.[7] Although many engage in the race and only one wins, he avows that "any man can be that one, God helping him." The most decisive thing in a man's life is this matter of being an individual; it is a decision which involves all eternity as well as time. This same decision lies at the basis of neighborly love and conditions all amicable relations. In many a fervent passage Kierkegaard declared his faith in those who really became individuals.

Kierkegaard's view of the truth is in line with this emphasis on the individual. Truth is for the individual, "the crowd is untruth." Truth does not consist in a body of objective facts, "the truth is subjectivity." Truth stands in direct relation to experience, "the only truth that edifies is truth for me." These different strains blend to make up his peculiar conception of the truth. It begins with the subject, never with the proposition, for truth is in the person who believes, not in the proposition believed. Any other view is to his way of thinking drab and lifeless. The truth is in the individual's appropriation of that which transforms him here and now, imparting an enthusiasm which fires his whole being, giving light and passion for the venture of life. The entire personality, emotions as well as intellect, enters into this experience. The truth which wins its way by acts of tremendous decision is best described as "existential." It answers the question of all questions, "What must I do to be saved?" He to whom the truth comes is not a spectator but an actor, for Kierkegaard rebelled not only against the Hegelian metaphysics but against its epistemology which reduced the individual to a mere spectator. A quotation which both illustrates his view of the truth and the difficulty of Kierkegaard's style is given here:

> "The most objective truth which is necessarily and universally true for every one and for the whole creation, the truth that God exists, is given to you—to *you* in the most emphatic sense of the word—most safely hidden by the most subjective truth which in all the immensity of creation is *only* valid for you, which you can communicate to no one except to God alone, and which remains

[7] Ibid., p. 129.

> for all eternity a secret between you and God, and which you can communicate to God because it was he who first communicated it to you in your conscience. Truth lies in subjectivity." [8]

Kierkegaard likened himself to one who stood in the narrow defile at Thermopylae. At the risk of being trampled underfoot, he must "provoke, if possible invite, stir up, many to press through this defile of the 'individual' through which, however, no one can pass except by becoming the "individual." And, when he fell, there could be placed on his gravestone the single epitaph,

"That Individual"

III

In 1843, the year Kierkegaard published his first great work—*Either/Or,*—Feuerbach wrote: "Christianity has in fact long vanished, not only from reason but from the life of mankind, it is nothing more than a *fixed idea,* in flagrant contradiction with our fire assurance companies, our railroads, etc. . . ." But Kierkegaard did not believe that Christianity had vanished, rather that its true nature was woefully misunderstood. "The thing of becoming and being a Christian," he wrote, "is now a triviality." The Christian faith had been falsified and vitiated by the corroding acids of the intellectual atmosphere of the early nineteenth century. The metaphysical subtleties of Hegel, the romanticism of Goethe, Schelling, Herder and others, the religious subjectivism of Schleiermacher with its attending pantheism, the sentimentality of Rousseau giving rise to the notion of "the beautiful soul" inherent in humanity—all these influences, with the scepticism they provoked added to the shattering effects of the cataclysmic events that followed in the wake of 1789, had introduced an alien note into the Christian faith and robbed it of its power to make strong souls. In his native land, Kierkegaard saw all these forces most vividly expressed in the aesthetical philosophy of J. L. Heiberg and in the liberal theology of H. L. Martensen, the future bishop.

The cumulative effect was that the Christian faith had been reduced to a half-hearted endeavor to achieve relative rather than absolute ends; seeking first food, raiment, money, and honor with the Kingdom of God reduced to an entirely secondary place. Christianity, so Kierkegaard protested, had lost its heroic note, it had become soft, complacent,

[8] Haecker, Theodor—*Sören Kierkegaard,* p. 23. Oxford Press.

even decadent. He strove with all his powers to reintroduce that lost note into the Christian faith. Temperamentally he was one of those sensitive, tortured souls never content with less than the highest—and, as he himself admitted, the hardest. Yet, his criticisms were not merely a matter of temperament—they gave evidence of the seer; he probed conditions to their very depth and laid bare their inherent, fatal weaknesses. He pictured Christian ideals, as Geismar his truest interpreter said, "in all their lofty nobility and uncompromising ideality"—magnificent because so difficult. His own ideals were lofty and uncompromising, never possible of attainment by purely human effort, as he realized, but only by the grace of God. After he had experienced his religious awakening and left behind the earlier "stages on life's road," the aesthetical and the ethical, there was no turning back, never an admission that a lesser good than the highest would satisfy.

Some contemporary thinkers, as the Barthians, who acknowledge the influence of Kierkegaard, call attention to "a strange new world within the Bible" to which they have introduced us. In this they are true to their great master, for Kierkegaard shaped his conceptions far more faithfully after the thought of the Biblical writers than have many of his critics. This has been seen in his conception of God and his emphasis on the status of the individual. Here, he challenged fellow Christians to investigate whether those postulates which have become sacred in liberal Christianity are really Biblical—cloudless optimism, inevitable progress, the realization of the Kingdom of God here and now with an abundance of joy in the present age. Old Testament apocalypticism may lend some support to these dreams, but the teaching of the New Testament is more realistic. There *is* a way to peace, an experience of joy, a realization of the Kingdom of God, but in each case it is by the same road, that of suffering. Those who follow the Christian way of life are under orders from one who came "to kindle fire on earth." They find themselves "pressed in on every side, yet not straitened." Their constant admonition is to "Watch!" They live in the ever-present apprehension of not yet having attained. The New Testament form of the Christian faith stands in violent contradiction to all easy-going, superficial notions such as would make "the thing of becoming and being a Christian a triviality." Kierkegaard's motto might well have been that which Nietzche was later to put into the words, "live dangerously." Seldom did Kierkegaard write with more bitterness than when he attacked the church and contemporary Chris-

tian conceptions and norms. Of this the following quotation is a fair example:

> "New Testament Christianity does not exist at all. Here there is nothing to reform; here it is a matter of bringing light into a Christian criminal offence, continued through centuries, practised by millions (innocently or guiltily), a crime by which shrewdly, under the pretence of reforming Christianity, the attempt has been made, little by little, to trick God out of Christianity, to make Christianity just the opposite of what it is in the New Testament." [9]

During his later years Kierkegaard became more and more bitterly anticlerical. On his death-bed he even refused the communion from a clergyman. In the compromising, luxury-loving, timid clergy of his native land he saw the embodiment of all that was sterile and superficial in the Christian faith. He warned Danish Protestants that their greatest peril was not that they hoped for salvation by good works but that they had no good works. Christianity had conformed to an excessive worldliness, in the midst of which one of his zealous nature proclaimed the flaming truth of man's need of God and of suffering as the way to peace at the risk of martyrdom. Kierkegaard did not desire disciples, neither to be regarded as the founder of a movement nor as the head of a faction. He wanted only to stir men from their lethargy by being as his great master Socrates, a "gadfly." This, he held, was far more important—and more difficult—than to transmit a body of truth hardened into so many inflexible propositions to be memorized. He never shrank from carrying out his commission as a martyr-prophet. He would not were he among us today. He would find the same need for it. And, he would undoubtedly be equally bitter in his attitude toward the church and the clergy.

Regarding his mission, when yet a fairly young man, Kierkegaard said to himself: "You are not a genius, and certainly you have no commission to render the whole human race happy, . . . you can go about this job of trying to make something harder." Because he has made something harder, and more excellent, than our shallow optimisms had admitted—a kind of Christian faith that makes greater demands on both faith and conscience—he is hailed with joy in many quarters for the "corrective" tendencies of his enduring genius.

[9] Bain, John A. *Sören Kierkegaard,* Student Christian Movement Press.

BOOKS OF INTEREST TO MINISTERS

Why Hitler's Economy Fooled the World. Henry J. Taylor. The Christopher Publishing House, Boston. 45 pp. $1.00. 1941.

Mr. Taylor, a specialist in economic studies in the University of Virginia, later a leading businessman in this country with wide interests aborad, sets forth summarily his findings on the politico-social problems through which emerged totalitarian economics. He gives a most interesting account, derived from personal "on-the-ground" study of Germany through inflation years and the rise of National-Socialism. He demonstrates that "The capital of the national community is as much or as little as the physical assets capable of the productive process under the social-political conditions surrounding them." The majority of the British political and financial leaders did not recognize this definition of capital and failed to anticipate what "Germany's Economy of Coercion" could do to put that country in a position to enter upon world-conquest. The German people's interest in freedom was utilized by the Nazis for their own purposes and "this freedom was embezzled to usurp the benefits of Capitalism." Not only in Britain but in America democratic minds have been unable to see what has been going on in the totalitarian system where "there can be no such thing as ownership of property, thought, speech, or religion. Confiscation is inherent in the system itself."

T. W.

Saint Paul. Jacques Maritain. Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1941. 161 pp. $1.25.

Here is another volume of "The Living Thoughts Library," whose general editor is Alfred O. Mendel, and whose prime purpose is to bring before readers of the English-speaking world the work of outstanding leaders of mankind's march through history. The author is a French Catholic, a noted philosopher and theologian. His biblical quotations are taken from the Westminster new translation of "the Scriptures from the original Greek and Hebrew texts." He calls his book "a commentary on the Great Doctor of Grace and Freedom, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, the Apostle of the Gentiles." Allowing for all the inhibitions operating upon the mind of the author in his use of New Testament scholarship and its manifold results in the field of biblical exposition this is a very readable and useful commentary. All Christians would agree with this statement concerning the significance of Saint Paul. "The irresistible dynamism which runs through all his teaching draws souls toward that perfection of charity which, as Saint Thomas Aquinas would explain, is not merely counseled, but commanded, and which comes under the first commandment of the New Law, not doubtless as something to be instantly realized (that is quite impossible) but as the end to which we are summoned and at which all Christian life should aim." Clarity of thought and conciseness of language mark every page of this pocket classic.

T. W.